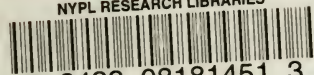


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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES
OF SOME OF THE
EARLY SETTLERS
OF THE
CITY OF CHICAGO.

PART I.

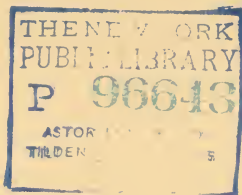
S. LISLE SMITH,	GEORGE DAVIS,
DR. PHILIP MAXWELL,	JOHN J. BROWN,
RICHARD L. WILSON,	COL. LEWIS C. KERCHIVAL
URIAH P. HARRIS,	HENRY J. CLARKE,
SAMUEL J. LOWE.	

Gen. P. A. Sheridan
With Compliments
CHICAGO:

FERGUS PRINTING COMPANY.

244-8 ILLINOIS STREET,

1876.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE following pages are intended merely as sketches of character—not labored biographies. In the inception, the object was simply to prepare a few newspaper articles, to be read and thrown aside, as other ephemeral literature. But partial, very likely over-partial, friends, who saw the earlier manuscripts, believed them worthy of a better fate—believed them (how could I question the verdict?) to be recollections of the fast-growing dim past, that should be garnered, and would be cordially received and valued by the olden-time citizens of Chicago. This being the case, and my friend of “auld lang syne”, Mr. Robert Fergus, having determined to give them the dignity of a book, no one can regret more sincerely than the writer that greater care was not taken in the preparation—that they were not given more at length—that more of birth and family had not been gathered. That would have made them interesting—to their descendants.

The general public, however, may fancy them as well in the present form. They, at least, care little or nothing where the accident of birth occurred, or whether the name of the father was John or Jehosaphat, and that of the mother Mary or Jerusha! They simply require a mental photograph of those who walked the streets when Chicago was a *terra incognita*,—who filled the places they now fill,—who passed through the same trials and had the same hopes and fears—the same clothing and passions of mortality. Birth or nation, we take it, has little to do with how each “acts his part.” It is the *man* only that survives—save with the loving hearts of kindred.

Of the *knowledge* of what I have feebly attempted, I was part of all. Though not among the earliest, yet I was an early citizen of the now famous “Garden City,” and my business was such as to throw me into intimate association with all classes, more than was generally the case, and the lines written upon the memory of the boy have not been obliterated from that of the gray-headed man any more than the city can be blotted from the map of the world,—such a thing could never be. Love for

INTRODUCTION.

those still living, and graves (may they be ever green ones) by the lake side forbid such a thing.

Of my *ability* to do justice to those who "have gone on before," I feel its want to the extreme, and, had I known what was to follow, would have burned the first pages of manuscript and shrank from the task,—what it was I realized too late. But one thing I do know—nothing untruthful, no single word of bitterness (no matter what might have occurred in other days, when hearts beat high and passions ran strong,) has been permitted to be here set down. Indeed, I can say—and that with my hand upon my heart—that nothing of the kind remains. Looking backward, one almost shudders as he learns that what he considered the fault of another was his own, and the blame rests upon his shoulders alone!

Chicago, it must be remembered, was a very different affair thirty and forty years ago from what it is now. Then everybody knew everybody, as in village society. Consequently, one could not but be familiar with the men who stood the highest in the community—with their acts as their faces—could not but be interwoven with them in daily life—could not but have stamped upon memory their individuality. Then, there were comparatively few who marked themselves above their fellows, and to forget them would be to forget, almost, one's self—and writing of them is as turning open the book of your own life.

It would be impossible for any to write of so long ago without having their statements questioned, and I do not expect to escape. Human memory at best is treacherous, and the same witnesses often look at the same transaction from a different standpoint. To anyone in the least familiar with courts of justice this explanation will be sufficient. To any others who may quibble, I can say, in all honesty, that any statement of fact made in these pages is a fact "according to the best of my information and belief," and that we may have looked at the same object at a different time or from an opposite side.

As to *opinions of character*, they are my own. Not a single person has made any suggestion—not one attempted the slightest influence. If I have erred in my judgment of men, I am alone responsible. My study of character may be wrong, but, as I have judged others, I am willing to be judged.

HON. S. LISLE SMITH.

There was no one better known to the "old citizens" of Chicago, nor justly more famous for brilliancy and innate kindness of heart, than SAMUEL LISLE SMITH—or, as he was familiarly called, "Lisle."

Gifted by nature far above the great majority of his fellows, with a rare education, striking ideality, and love and appreciation of the poetic and beautiful, with the most retentive of memories—one so marvelously perfect that he could quote the words, section, page, and book of almost anything he had ever read, and his simple *ipse dixit* would be taken as law in any court in the city—a natural as well as finely cultivated orator, he was, indeed, at the head of his compeers at least in that respect.

In stature, Mr. Smith was about medium size, with a slightly florid complexion, rather light hair, active in his movements, rapid as forcible in speech, graceful in every gesture, wonderful in imagery, the very soul of pathos, and could hold an audience spell-bound for any length of time, as was proven again and again.

As to his eloquence, the entire wisdom and the selected "best speakers" of the nation bowed unanimously to it, at the famous "Harbor and River Convention." Horace Greeley said he was "the star speaker of the vast assembly—stood without a rival," and the writer of this has often seen a letter from Henry Clay, avowing that he "was the best orator he had ever heard." Could better testimony be required to prove a fact? In short, Mr. Smith stood head and front above all he met at that time (as, indeed,

at any other) for magnetic influence over the masses, for flow of language, for all that goes to make up the orator—stood without the approach of a rival—without it might have been S. S. PRENTISS.

When Lisle Smith spoke, the house was certain to be crowded, no matter what its size or what the occasion. All who resided in the "Garden City" ("*Urbs in horto*," as the motto upon the Corporate Seal has it) at the time, and were fortunate enough to hear him, will remember with pleasure his eulogy upon JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, when the Methodist Church (then standing on the corner of Washington and Clark Streets) was so jammed that the speaker had to be taken in at a window and carried over the heads of the audience to the pulpit; also his famous oration before the "Sons of Penn," at the little wooden church of the Second Presbyterian Society (situate on Randolph Street, midway between Clark and Dearborn). and, also, his address at the "Irish Relief Meeting," at the Baptist Church on the corner of Washington and LaSalle Streets.

Of the "Penn" oration, I remember well the incidents preceding it. It was delivered upon the afternoon of the funeral of JUDGE JESSE B. THOMAS. After the services, Mr. Smith and myself left together—he to keep his appointment and I to listen. Benjamin F. Taylor, the poet of the day, had finished, and the large audience was anxiously waiting. Mr. Smith entered, walked rapidly to the pulpit, and prefaced his oration with the following fitly-chosen words, and in a voice tremulous with emotion:—

"Returning from the funeral obsequies of a dear, tried, and trusted friend, I appear before you with a mournful heart and sorrowing spirit to perform the duty allotted to me."

Then he plunged, *in media res*, into the subject, by quoting, "Saint John upon the Isle of Patmos, said: write

to my friends in Philadelphia," and for an hour not a sound was to be heard save his own voice, unless when the pent-up enthusiasm could no longer be restrained, and applause caused the very roof to vibrate.

His power over an audience was wonderful—matchless—his flights of fancy sublime, and have never, I think, been surpassed. He was bitterly severe when he chose to indulge in invective, as shown in his numerous political speeches, but it was the keen cutting of the razor rather than the dulled edge of the sword; and he had no equal in pathos, as the not-to-be-checked tears of the multitude at the "Irish Relief Meeting" most faithfully attested. Not one there, I venture to assert, has forgotten, or ever can forget, his vividly terrible description of the approach of gaunt, skeleton famine, of hollow-eyed starvation, as it stalked resistlessly through the land, touching first the finger tips, and then creeping slowly on until it reached and fastened upon the heart—the wildly fearful Nemesis that bowed strong men and loving women and innocent childhood, and turned the "Green Isle of the sea" into a horrible graveyard! It was too living a reality—too minutely faithful and eloquently voiced a description ever to be effaced from memory.

There was, also, a vast fund of humor in the character of Mr. Smith, though permitted to show itself more in private than public—not broad, Falstaffian, grotesque humor, but a subtle, delicate appreciation of mirth, which his power of mimicry made irresistible, and of which many instances might be adduced. This, with a charity that was as unostentatious as it was lavish, underlaid all his actions and assisted much in giving the magnetism that instantly made him *en rapport* with any audience.

But notwithstanding his powers of oratory—his brilliant flow of language, that was always chosen from the inevitably best words, and always poetic in imagery as pure in diction and logical in argument, nothing—literally noth-

ing—remains of his speeches save a glowing, though sad, memory. The perfume of the rose lingers around the broken vase, but, alas! that is all,

“Appealing by the magic of *his* name,
To gentle feelings, and affections kept
Within the heart, like gold.”

Shortly after his death, his lifetime friend, RICHARD L. WILSON, (of the *Evening Journal*,)—another brave heart and true,—and others endeavored to obtain data for their publication, but nothing could be found. He never wrote a single word even of his greatest efforts. It was his custom, when preparing a speech, to walk up and down the shore of the lake, talking to himself—shaping the crude material into form, and, with the matter once fluxed in the subtle crucible of his brain, it was never forgotten.

In political life, he stood among the foremost, ever in the van; though never either asking or accepting an office when proffered, while working devotedly for his party and his friends. Of this let me give a single instance out of the multitude, one that will show more clearly the man than any words of my own could do. He was—could not conceal the fact—disappointed in the nomination of GENERAL TAYLOR, but when the old warrior was fairly in the field for the Presidency, he threw all his influence in his favor and did much towards securing his election. That accomplished, and the inauguration over, he visited Washington and paid his respects to the Chief Magistrate. Again and again he called, chatting interestingly, as he so well could do, and left without a word of business. Then he called yet once more, to say farewell, and as he was about leaving, the old war horse said, in his bluff and hearty way,

“Mr. Smith, I like you.”

“The admiration is more than mutual,” replied Lisle: “but why, General?”

“Because you are very different from anyone who has

called upon me. Everybody wants an office, and you have asked for nothing."

"And would not accept the highest in your gift."

"But can I do nothing for you, sir?"

"Nothing personally, but, if you please, General, it would be a great pleasure to me if you would appoint —— Post Master at Chicago;" and he eloquently presented the claims of the candidate.

Need I say the appointment was made?

Were space permitted, I could fill pages with such pleasant memories of the man—memories that deserve to be perpetuated: but a brief notice is all that is permitted.

His political speeches were, truly, a power in the land. An old-line Whig of the strictest school, he loved—worshipped were, perhaps, the more fitting term—"Harry of the West," as he delighted to call Clay; and, probably, did more for his party than any of his time in Illinois. Right or wrong he carried his hearers with him, and spent his money freely in the cause. So much was he interested in the political struggles of the country that he gave up the practice of his profession (law) at an early day, though, had he been so disposed, he would have been without a rival as a jury lawyer—would have occupied the place at the Chicago Bar that James T. Brady occupied in New York.

In social intercourse, no man was (or is) to be found who could more charm or hold fast the attention. That this was the case, all who ever shared his open-handed hospitality, and that of his beautiful and accomplished wife, will attest. His conversation was of the character that made one a willing listener, and compelled regret when he had finished, for—

"On every point, in earnest or in jest,

His judgment, and his prudence, and his wit,

Were deemed the very touchstone and the test

Of what was proper, graceful, just, and fit."

This I saw proven again and again, even among strangers.

When the *first* "Sherman House" (created from the "City Hotel") was standing, Mr. Smith entered, one evening, with a friend, and their conversation drifted upon the life and character of Henry Clay. The reading-room was filled with men engaged with their own particular topics, but, as he enlarged upon his idea, everyone became silent, and remained so until a very late hour. Of that night I have a perfectly distinct recollection, and especially of the conclusion. The *dust* of the years that have fallen have failed to dim its individuality.

"I tell you," said the enthusiastic orator, "that Harry Clay will never die, but will be translated, like Elijah of old. When the Lord wants him, he will send down angels with a golden chariot, and one of them will tell his errand. 'Wait a moment,' will be the courteous reply, 'I must bid my wife farewell.' Entering the house, he will tell of the kingly summons, and say, 'Mary, I must go—farewell. Tell everyone that the Union must and shall be preserved,' and stepping into the heavenly car will be borne aloft from glory unto glory!"

I feel that I have failed in giving the beauty of his words—the sublimity of his imagery,—indeed I might as well attempt to chain a sunbeam. The hour and the "man eloquent," the burning eye, the wrapt face, the impassioned gestures—all are wanting—can never be reproduced. But this may give a feeble conception of the reality.

I think I am perfectly safe in asserting that Lisle Smith never had an enemy, even though far from faultless. But his errors never injured others. He was loved by the high and low, and the cold-blooded, cynical, and fault-finding dared not deny his greatness as an orator and his large-hearted and sympathetic liberality as a man. At his death one of the old and most striking landmarks was blotted out. He was a member of the "Old Settlers'" and many other societies, and was universally regretted. As far as I know his place has never been filled, and he who is worthy

to step in his shoes will, indeed, have a proud record. Ah! how many hearts beat sadly as the bell tolled for him, and how many trembling lips whispered, "Brave heart, true friend, hail and farewell."

GEORGE DAVIS.

The musical population of Chicago—*id est*, old Chicago—will remember, with feelings of pleasure as well as regret, the man whose name stands at the head of this brief biography.

Though English by the accident of birth, Mr. Davis came early to this country—was a thorough and patriotic American at heart, and his popularity enabled him to secure and long retain the office of County Clerk.

A "fellow of infinite jest," with a kind word and smile for everyone who approached him, he had troops of friends, who remained firm until the very last, and sorrowed truly when death called him hence:—but it could not have been to the land of silence, for from the choir of earth he must have been welcomed by the sweet singers above.

Mr. Davis was the prime mover in all charitable concerts, as he was the most noted leader of his time in the Episcopal Church (first Saint James', and, subsequently, Trinity), of which he was a member, and no entertainment of which vocal music was a part was complete without him. Though gifted with uncommon powers in rendering the plaintive (who does not remember the "Surf"? and how he would have given expression to "Annie Laurie"!) yet it was in the grotesque—the serio-comic—the broadly humorous—that his rare mimicry could best be brought

into play, and his facial expression used—that he most excelled, and will, perhaps, be the best remembered. There he stood, without a rival—if, indeed, any could be found in the “Garden City” at the present time.

Of this, I need but mention “The Great Mogul”—sung as it was by him—acted as it was by him—I think it has never been equalled upon the stage, and certainly not surpassed. Of course, there were many others, the words of which he himself set to music, that ever caused laughter, and never failed to “bring down the house,” but the song I have mentioned was the most riotous in expression, although

“A merrier man,
Within the limits of becoming mirth,
I never spent an hour’s talk withal.”

Of the power exercised by his singing, I mention one striking instance, showing, as it does, not alone the charm of a rich and cultivated voice, but the respect and love in which he was held by the citizens—one so great as to subdue even the wild waves of land speculation and ever-grasping avarice—to make the might of Orpheus no fable and the lures of the Sirens no myth.

At the time of the sale of Canal lands and lots in September, 1848. Mr. Davis lived upon Canal Street, between Randolph and Madison, holding a *quasi* preëmption upon the lot on which his house was builded. The property was even then valuable, though the fabulous prices at which it has since been sold were never dreamed of, and many were anxious to purchase. The adjoining property had been disposed of at an extreme figure, and when the auctioneer (James A. Marshall) put up that particular lot, “George” trembled, for fear it would be run up beyond his ability to purchase. It was well known that he was not the possessor of a very bountiful supply of this world’s goods (so liberal, so open-handed and open-hearted a man never could be), and he whispered his trouble to some of

his friends, and it instantly became known to the crowd, whose sympathy was not slow in being aroused. His bid (the valuation) was made and then a song was called for, and, mounting upon the top of an omnibus, he sang as, perhaps, he never did before, or after, in his life—sang with his whole heart, and eyes misty with gratitude. There was no bid against him—music carried the day, and, though David Leavitt (the President of the Canal Board) fumed, he was powerless to stem the tide of popular feeling, and was forced to see a valuable lot sacrificed for a merely nominal sum—in fact, sold for a song!

It may be urged that Chicago was young at that time—the people uncultivated, and not competent judges of music; but those who assert such a thing know little of what they are talking about, and are overwise in their own conceit. Ask anyone who lived then and is living now, and he will tell you that the amateur concerts of those days shame many of the professionals now; that Mrs. Harrington, Mrs. Dr. J. Jay Stuart, Henry Tucker, George Davis, “the sweet girl singer of St. James’,” and others,* have never been surpassed for purity of voices and skill of execution. Ah! what a bright galaxy have passed away, and what an addition has been made to that matchless choir “whose strains are immortal and whose vibrations are eternal.”

Mr. Davis was essentially a social man, and one whose presence was ever felt, or missed. This was owing to his genial face, his ever-bubbling wit, and suave manners, as much as to his great musical ability, liberal charities, and warm friendship. No sorrow or want ever appealed to him in vain, and if it was little he could bestow, that little seemed to carry with it a blessing and a benediction. With his leaving Chicago (to settle in Detroit) one of the olden links was broken—one of the most familiar of the old faces

* Wm. M. Larrabee, Moss Botsford, Charles Collier, Augustus H. Burley, and Charles Burley.

gone; but those who remember the little, two-story brick building that stood upon the North-East corner of the Public Square, and was dignified with the title of "Court House," will rarely think of it without associating him with it—forming, as he did, the attraction for so many years.

Mr. Davis was, in the strongest meaning of the term, a friend; and, as far as my recollection serves, never had an enemy—save such as might have grown up from his fervent espousal of the case of the Rev. William F. Walker, in the then celebrated church trial, and of which it may be said, *en passant*, was bitter in the extreme.—long-continued—argued with great eloquence, but which left a baleful shadow over the congregation for a long time.*

He was of fine physique and presence and carriage, something of a *bon vivant* in his manner of living, and it was a matter of wonder that he did not take a place as speaker as well as singer, for certainly he had all the requisites—except, perhaps, assurance. But he loved "sweet melodies married to words," better than all else, and though there was much of the artist in his nature, and he sketched well, yet music absorbed all his spare time, and even trespassed upon the hours of business.

His name—the few thoughts here jotted down will re-open the pages of the past to those of the olden time, and his friends (and who were not?) will drop another tear upon his grave, and kindly brush the moss from the marble above it.

* The array of legal learning present it would be difficult to duplicate now, for in it were interested such men as Justin Butterfield, General James A. McDougall, Isaac N. Arnold, John J. Brown, and Patrick Ballingall.

PHILIP MAXWELL, M.D.

The Medical Faculty of Chicago would, and justly, deem themselves neglected if no mention was made of the Falstaff of the Profession who, to use one of his own arguments why he should be elected to the Legislature, "*carried twelfth weight with him!*"

In *physique*, at least, this was true. Dr. Maxwell was a man of more than ordinary stature and unctuousness; yet barely approximating to the gross. He carried his two hundred and eighty pounds very easily and gracefully, though that is more than could have been truly said of the favorite grey horse upon which he was accustomed to dash through the streets with all the *chic* and erectness of a soldier and the abandon and insouciance of an Indian. Indeed, so active and light were his movements, for one of his figure, that it was always a subject of remark, especially when mounting and dismounting. So, too, was it when he trippingly danced in those "good old days" when Chicago Society was a unit and unbroken by cliques—by the withdrawal of the *crème de la crème* from the "promiscuous gatherings," and the setting up for themselves of a standard blazoned with the motto "I am better than thou,"—a most sublime piece of egotism.

Of this permit a word.

The last general, free, and genial reunion of the votaries of Terpsichore was held at the "Sherman House," and (I think) known as the "Mechanics Ball." It was gotten up as an offset to that of the "Young Bachelors," a very select and (supposed to be) *recherché* affair, and the tickets placed at the merely nominal sum of one dollar, including car-

riages and refreshments. To carry out the intention of the originators (and who, by the way, had a large deficiency of funds to make up)—all prominent citizens were enlisted as managers, and a difficulty arose as to how they could be classed as Mechanics.

“Put down Doctor Maxwell as a Butcher,” quoth Col. Swift.

“And Dick Swift as a Barber!” (*i. e.*, Money-lender—shaver) was the ready retort of the Physician.

In this way all trouble was overcome and the ball was large—immense, enthusiastic, and enjoyable. It was, however, the final gasp of general sociability, and the united Chicago of the old was known nevermore. But to return to the subject proper.

The face of Doctor Maxwell was in keeping with his ponderous frame. It was broad, massive, pleasant, and beaming with mirth—the last being the key-note of his character. It had, like his person Falstaffian breadth, and depth, and proportion. He was constantly upon the *qui vive* for objects of merriment, was a

“Rare compound of oddity, frolic, and fun,
Who relished a joke and rejoiced in a pun.”

Even at the most solemn times it was next to impossible for him to keep the bubbles from rising to the surface—the gas of frivolity from escaping. Nature had cast him in the mould of “Sir John,” and study and love of the character had perhaps tinged his own until it had grown to resemble the would-be lover of Madame Ford and “sweet Mistress Page.”

I know such was the charge against him—that he ever aped the burly guzzler of sack and fancied himself the successful rival of the wonderful creation of Shakespeare. Granted that the charge was true, the idiosyncrasy was perfectly harmless. But the Doctor cared little for such insinuations, though he could be “testy” at times and

pour out the vials of his wrath like the bursting forth of a volcano. He was contented to go along "larding the lean earth," enjoying a laugh, no matter at whose expense, and making merry at life, come in what shape it might, though the sunshine and shadows in such lives are very marked. But, for the most part, he was remarkably genial,—feeling his own weaknesses as well as those of others; and, in his limited sphere, was a very "king of misrule." If he had made the peculiarities of Falstaff a study, and reproduced them in his daily walk and conversation, it was without malice to others—on the contrary, for their amusement.

As a rule, he carried sunshine in his face and heart and a quip upon the end of his tongue—was at his richest, when he could get a good joke upon his brother professors of the curative art—STUART, EGAN, AND ELDRIDGE—when firing double shotguns and entire batteries at a time at the Faculty of Rush Medical College—and what stories the old wooden office in Clark Street could tell were speech given and had it not long since been dust and ashes.

Perhaps the highest relish of the Doctor was humbugging the credulous with Munchausen stories, equalling any of the "Fat Knight." Instances of this rise thickly as memory turns back to the man and the past is vividly pictured again. But one must suffice, though the temptation to fill pages is great:

On a bitter morning in early winter, he entered a hotel, drank a glass of water (he was habitually temperate), rubbed his hands complacently and discoursed pompously upon the merits of bathing.

"Surely," exclaimed one of the loungers around the glowing stove, "you have not been bathing this cold morning?"

"Of course I have—swimming, Sir, swimming," was the answer.

"Where Doctor?"

"In the lake."

"The lake? Impossible! It must be frozen along the shores."

"Yes—certainly—yes, but I make it a practice of going in every morning as long as my weight will break the ice;" and he departed leaving his hearers puzzled as to the truth of the story—and which did not contain a particle of it.

It was Doctor Maxwell who made the sweeping and far from complimentary criticism upon the late Edwin Forrest. Although already published let me introduce it here in brief:

The "great tragedian" was playing his first engagement in Chicago, had finished for the night, was going to his hotel down the street immediately preceded by the Doctor and his party. His opinion was asked and the answer given in such boisterous tones that Forrest could not fail to have heard it—"A brute force and native stupidity actor!" Whether just or not, it was his opinion, and the world was never kept in doubt as to what he thought.

There was much in the character and mannerism of Dr. Maxwell that reminds me very forcibly of the Lawrence Baythorn of Dicken's "Bleak House" more than Falstaff. There was the same bluff, hearty, brusque fashion of greeting—the same noisy explosions—the same extravagant expressions and denunciations—the same tremendous bursts of laughter—the same ferocious threatening—and the same tender heart breathing within the massive breast that would turn aside for fear of trampling on a worm, even while breathing tornadoes of wordy wrath and hurling wordy thunderbolts of wholesale destruction. But these things (when not uttered and acted in jest, as was frequently the case, served the more to clear the sky; and the man—whom a stranger might have looked upon as bloodthirsty—was as kind in reality, as incapable of doing harm as a child—a singular combination of Baythorn and Falstaff.

JOHN J. BROWN.

My introduction to the subject of this brief memoir was so peculiar and striking that it could not be forgotten, particularly when taken in connection with the man—one almost *sui generis*. It must have occurred very soon after his advent in the Garden City, for I had never seen or even heard of him.

I was returning late one evening from a visit to a sick friend. There was a wild storm abroad. Clouds were flying in tumultuous confusion, driven by the fierce North-wind; rain was falling heavily; the lake was lashed into foam and tossing in great billows upon the shore; the thunder was booming and crashing, and ever and anon the lightning played around with dazzling and fitful fury. It was not such a night as one would willingly be abroad, and I was breasting and struggling against the elemental war up Michigan Avenue, in the vicinity of Randolph Street, when a more than usually terrific burst of thunder caused me to pause—a vivid flash of lightning to glance anxiously around and I saw a man standing upon the lake-side of the Avenue gesticulating fiercely, and in the lull that followed, I could distinctly hear him talking to himself.

Curiosity could not be repressed. I fancied it must be one insane; and, forgetting the storm and darkness, the fearful pealing of the thunder, the rain, and the dangerous play of the lightning, I crossed and drew near to his side. And as I did so, there came to my ears the well-known words of Byron :

“The sky is changed ! and such a change ! Oh ! night,
And storm and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as in the light
Of a dark eye is woman ! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among
Leaps the live thunder ! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who called to her aloud !”

Who could be quoting poetry at such a time and in such a situation ? If curiosity had been aroused before, it stood toptoeed now. I drew back, thrilling with a strange fear. and waited for the next flash to reveal form and feature. When it came, I looked upon a stranger who would have impressed himself upon any assembly. The picture rises before me now, weird almost as then, when the background was foaming and hissing waters, and black chaos of sky, and the shadows following the flashes eerie ones.

The figure was tall, angular, slightly bent, and wrapped in a cloak ; the face sallow, somewhat hollow, with high cheek bones, and eyes deep set, heavily browed and lashed. and with more than usual power of focusing and penetrating. The head was held firmly, straight, defiantly, and covered with long, leonine hair, blown fitfully about by the wind. The voice sonorous and emphatic.

That man was John J. Brown, a newly arrived lawyer, as I came later to know, and the impression of him then received (almost boy as I was) without doubt ever after colored my view of his character, and something of it may linger even now, despite the dust and iconoclastic power of so many years.

John J. Brown was naturally a retiring, misanthropic man. The lenses through which he looked at life seemed to be ever clouded—the glimpses of sunshine rare. Whether his nature was naturally morbid—whether untoward circumstances had made it so, I never had the means of knowing : but that he was uncommonly shy and sensitive, and ever

looked at the darkest side, I am of opinion will not be questioned. He lacked, perhaps, the rebound, the recuperative power to recover from a blow or loss; and he made its sting deeper by brooding upon it. As a boy, I think this must have been the case—as a man, standing breast-high and proud-headed in genius, learning, and eloquence among his fellows it certainly was so; and none who knew him will deny the assertion. "*Knew him!*" I have said: but were there any who did so? I doubt it very much—doubt if he ever had any intimate associates—any to whom he fully unbosomed himself—to whom he revealed his inner heart and the motives that were the mainspring of his actions. And if the olden mythological fables had in them aught of truth, it was Pluto that hovered about his cradle, and Niobe and Melpomene that were his attendant spirits through life.

This gave a sombre coloring to almost his every act and thought. The shadows were so dense behind the sunrays that they could never be entirely hidden—the gold not sufficiently bright to effectually curtain the gloom. In all his forensic efforts this was apparent (at least to my mind), and the highest flights of fancy seemed to be made with wings against which beat the rain. But, notwithstanding this, they were of great power, legal acumen, and sound law. His mind in this respect was singularly critical and analytical. The very things that militated against general sociability and the power of self-forgetfulness—in drinking in the perfume of the flower, unmindful of the cruel thorn and poisoned root, gave him the more taste and ability for research—more concentration of mind upon the salient points he intuitively and keenly appreciated, and ever after retained; and this was so, not alone in the law, but in all he read—history, poetry, philosophy, theology—and the most apropos quotations were ever at his command.

I have spoken of his hair being long and tawny as the mane of a lion. It was so in fact, was very noticable and

first called attention. But it was his eyes that unwaveringly fixed it, for, at times, when his soul was fully aroused, they literally appeared to burn. I use the term advisedly, and can find none more appropriate. When indulging in his wonderful and bitter powers of sarcasm; when forgetful of self, and the ebb and flood of sorrowful waves, in the mastery of his subject—when all the shadows were exorcised, his eyes gleamed with a strange phosphorescent light and exerted a strong, subtle, magnetic power that was not to be resisted. In that respect, he was very like Rufus Choate, of whom it has been said, "*no one could report if they looked at him!*" The same thing was, in a great measure, true of John J. Brown, as I learned by experience when attempting to reproduce his words upon paper, during a celebrated trial. I watched the speaker and forgot pencil and paper!

Looking calmly back now, after a decade and more have passed, I am inclined to believe his greatest power was in scathing denunciation and intense bitterness. I would not be understood that such was the natural status of his mind, for I do not believe it. On the contrary, I had occasion to know that the milk of human kindness had not soured within his veins, and there was much of the gentleness and tenderness of woman in his composition. But he was undoubtedly the great master of withering and remorseless irony when aroused, of satirical and scornful gibe then at the Chicago Bar—of sarcasm that when given full rein had something almost sardonic in it. To this end, his vehement gestures, his eyes, his tall, flexible person, and his leonine hair, all added emphasis, and woe to those upon whom the razorlike edge of his tongue fell when unbridled.

Two particular instances drift up from the depths of memory. The first is that of the trial of Rev. Wm. F. Walker, elsewhere mentioned :

The opening of his speech was calm, graceful, even beautiful. He said, "I did not expect to be present at this trial. I thought the blue waves of the lake would have

rolled and sparkled between me and it." But as he progressed, as he fully gave himself up to the subject he warmed, grew deeper, stronger in thought, more forcible in imagery, his nerves quivered, his hair was disordered, and his eyes flashed as burning steel. Any looker on must have been reminded of the gathering and bursting of a storm. And when at its height it was terrible. When he pictured the manufacturing of the "patchwork slanders"—of those professing the broadest humanity and Christianity, coming "to the altar with the word of God in their hands and the devil in their hearts"—when he hurled wholesale scorn and infamy upon their heads—when he spoke of their "supreme and besotted ignorance and worse than heathenish bigotry" he rose to such an altitude of invective that few who had awakened his wrath could remain, and even the ordinary listener felt a shivering awe and dread.

The second time was in a strictly legal encounter, and with foemen worthy of his steel:

One of his antagonists he (figuratively) held up by his long hair, so that all could see him, and painted him in such colors as made even the fiends appear more just and pure—made him act the most vile monster possible with humanity—cut so deeply that the audience could not but pity. Turning from the fierce whirlwind of denunciation, he addressed the other in low and measured tones—reminded him of his position in the Church, and saying: "I have no words for him. The reproof must come from a higher source, even from the God he pretends to worship," he fixed him with his eyes, and opening a bible read the most bitterly appropriate chapter contained between its lids.

They had raised the lion, and having felt the full weight of his claws and power of his teeth, paid dearly for their attack.

I know it was customary to compare John J. Brown with Justin Butterfield in this respect, but I never thought the comparison tenable. Butterfield was a man of undoubted

power of retaliation, and legal knowledge, but he lacked (in my judgment) the keenness of Brown. Were I to indulge in a simile, I should say, that, while from his heavy blows he might have been Richard, his rival was the Saladin—the one would crush with a gigantic battle-axe, the other cut to the heart with a blade of Toledo temper.

As to legal requirements, John J. Brown stood high. His mind was a treasure-house as was shown during the brief time he taught a law school. Had his natural temperament been different—had his health been better—had life been more roseate, he would, as the years rolled on, have made for himself a high and honored name. But he never mingled much with his fellows; and it was only when interested and awakened in the argument of a case that he revealed what he truly was—only then that the shadow was ever lifted from heart and brain.

The particulars of his death were not familiar to me. I have a faint recollection of some mystery shrouding it—that his soul found the *Nepenthe*, the “surcease from sorrow” otherwise than surrounded by loving hearts. Be that as it might, his life appeared to be a fitful one, and May he sleep well! More sunny natures have gone before, and have followed him, but no stronger, no more legal, none more intense have taken their places in the green tent “whose curtains never outward swing.” Aye, and in the younger ranks of his profession who can claim the place he left vacant? When some one shall write at length the history of the Bar of Chicago, upon its highest page will be found the name of John J. Brown. Peace, eternal peace to his ashes.

RICHARD L. WILSON.

The name of Richard L. Wilson was so long and intimately connected with the *Chicago Journal* that it is familiar as "household words", not only to the olden time readers of that paper, but to all who dwelt in the City, County, and it might almost be said, State.

His personal popularity, as well as his political influence, was widespread and universally admitted, although it was an impossibility for any one occupying the position he held to be without enemies. Yet these came from tilts in the arena of politics far more (if not entirely) than any other cause. For what he thought right he labored manfully—wielded a caustic pen, and threw hot-shot directly into the camp of the enemy, regardless of the consequences. But it was the cause, not the individual, he would cripple—the batteries he would unmask and silence—the rifle-pits he would cause to surrender, not the men of which they were composed. He believed the salvation of the country depended upon Henry Clay and the Whig Party; and it would have been very difficult for a "trumpet-tongued angel" to have convinced him to the contrary, for his was a positive nature.

To those who stood out of the reach of the flying splinters and débris, it was amusing to see how he would demolish the long "leaders" of his antagonists with a few words. As a writer of short, pithy, pointed paragraphs I never knew his equal among the Chicago editorial fraternity. This was his forte, and in it he resembled PRENTICE, of the *Louisville Journal*, more than any other of his day.

If grape-shot, and canister, and shrapnel were fired by broadsides, he answered with a single shot from a well-aimed rifled gun, which caused more havoc than all their noise and wholesale missiles. "Grandpa Dutch" might fire column after column of "double-led" matter at his head, and "Dick" would send back three lines that would drive even "*Banks!* BANKS! BANKS!" from the brain of the old gentleman, for a time at least.

In this, more than any other way, he made his editorial power felt, though he was sometimes tempted to indulge in it to excess, with regard to the *Democrat*, and its elongated proprietor, and laughingly own that he might as well have attempted to perforate the thick skin of a rhinoceros with mustard seed. It was, however, a favorite pastime with all the knights of the quill of the day—did no harm—served as a safety valve, and "Long John" continued to wax fat and rich and carry the Congressional district in his breeches pocket the same as before.

Save for these pointed squibs that generally pierced through the armor of his antagonist as if it had been but silken folds, Mr. Wilson (to the best of my knowledge) indulged but little in authorship, though famous for writing toasts, and good ones, for public dinners. The only instance of his "book making" that came under my observation was "*Short Ravelings from a Long Yarn*"—a story of Spanish life and adventure, and even that, I believe, was "licked into shape" by another. But Mr. Wilson furnished the data, supervised, and was entitled to the lion's share of the credit.

As I have already stated, long articles were not either his forte or his propensity. His spirit was too restless for such drudgery. It was with him aim and fire. He could not patiently still-hunt—could not follow a long trail Indian-like to secure a scalp. His nature was too ardent—he leaped over boundaries too rapidly for any such plodding, and if an enemy he was an open one. Every fibre of his

soul would have scorned lurking in ambush, striking without giving an opportunity of defense, stabbing from behind the back in the dark. Such things were altogether foreign to his nature. If impulsive he was honorable; if prone to criticise, just.

Of what his position would have been in the late unhappy fratricidal struggle no one who knew him will for a moment question. It could have been but one thing, and into the side he espoused he would have thrown himself body and soul. A divided country would never have been tolerated by him, even in thought. The Union, as he looked upon it, was ever to be a unit, and rested upon a foundation as lasting as time.

His patriotism was shown in the fatal rejoicing that crippled him for the remainder of his life. The news of the battle of Buena Vista, that sent an electric thrill through the land, stirred his breast to its lowest depths. He threw himself into the ranks of those who celebrated the victory—was the moving and master-spirit; but the premature explosion of the cannon used left a terrible personal record. And it showed, too, the iron nerve of the man—a will almost matchless in firmness—a scorn of physical suffering unparalleled—a power to endure that was beyond belief.

I was among the first to reach him, after the accident, having been a looker on at but a little distance. I helped to carry him into the Sherman House, and, consequently, know of what I write. To describe his injuries here would not only be useless, but create doubt. No one, who did not see him, would believe a man could be so mangled and live. It was a sight that made many a heart sick, and many a strong nature grow faint. This was the case with his regular physician. He attempted the necessary surgery, shook like an aspen, and was forced to give up the task to another. And during the lengthy ordeal, one of most terrible suffering, Mr. Wilson lay, with compressed lips—uttered no groan—never spoke of what he was so hero

ically enduring, save once. As a large, ragged splinter of the ramrod was being removed from its place under and intertwined with the biceps muscles of the right arm, he said, in answer to a question of a friend: "Yes, that hurts." That was all; and, taken as a whole, it was a masterly instance of patient endurance—a literal triumph of mind over matter. And this same indomitable will and nerve enabled him to soon again resume his duties; but the injuries ever after affected him and sapped his life.

Mr. Wilson was a genial companion and a true friend, was liberal beyond his means when his sympathies were enlisted, and never stopped to coldly count the cost of a favor. There was nothing selfish or phlegmatic about him. Every action sprang from the dictates of a manly-beating heart, and the faults (if they can justly so be called) that always cling to such men were attributable to the mental combination—to the actual necessity of excitement and action—to the never letting "I dare not wait upon I would," to (in practical life at least) the Napoleonic motto that—"the end justifies the means"—to the more than usual social element—to a remarkably vivid appreciation of the humorous—to his peculiar surroundings—to the association into which he was forced—to the age in which he lived.

Sportsmen of the days of Richard L. Wilson will remember him with pleasure. He was a keen lover of the gun and skilful in its use. If prairie chickens arose within reasonable distance, it was bad for the chickens! Had his early life been different, he would have enjoyed, as only such enthusiasts can enjoy, living with nature in her wildest moods and made his mark as hunter, pioneer, even "Indian fighter," for fear was not a component part of his being. He was the life of the camp fire as he was foremost in quest of game, and though he never "strung rhymes" had much of the poetic, and saw all that was beautiful in sky, water, woodland, and treeless plain. Glimmerings of this crop out in the little book I have mentioned, and it was

when afar from the haunts of men that it shone the brightest, sparkled the most brilliantly, rather than when weary and chafed by the editorial harness. Then he gave loose rein to his thoughts, flung aside the rare power of condensation that made his newspaper paragraphs mosaics of terse pointedness—indulged freely in anecdote, and jest, and repartee—gave graphic descriptions of hunter's life that spiced to perfection the birds broiling upon the glowing coals. Then, also, he showed as he never did at any other time, the wealth of his imagination, the power (if trained) to throw off page after page of brilliant matter—to make a remarkably readable book. That he never did was often a wonder to his friends. It might have come with his years (if spared) had it not been for the accident that made penmanship severe labor, and despite his buoyant heart and resolute will must have left a legacy of shadows. That he did not is to be regretted. It could not have been otherwise than valuable and interesting.

Mr. Wilson was an ardent admirer of and believer in the destiny of Chicago. He always predicted for it a bright and glorious future, and he foresaw something of its greatness. Not all—perhaps not one tithe. Who could? There was no prophetic ken keen enough, no imagination sufficiently vivid to grasp the possibilities when the terrible baptism and purification of fire should have been perfect.

Any who foretold what would arise from the ashes would have been deemed insane. But the mind of Richard L. Wilson grasped much of what has been—what will yet be. He realized the importance of its geographical position—its immense business resources and activity, and that, sitting as it did, drinking in the commerce of the chain of lakes upon one side, and stretching out its broad arms of prairie upon the other, it must become great. And in every way he assisted to its present. This his paper enabled him to do—for this he labored in season and out of season—for this he created friends by his personal attractiveness—and

for this, if the departed have power to return to the earth and minister to the wants of the living, his loyal spirit yet lingers over the city of his love and haunts the inner shrine of the *Chicago Journal*.

LEWIS C. KERCHIVAL.

Probably, very few of the younger generation in Chicago have any distinct remembrance of Lewis C. Kerchival. But such as do must have been impressed by the striking points in a character that stood out strongly from his fellows.

The elder citizens—those who still linger in green old age and ripe usefulness, and it is to be hoped with plenty of this world's goods, after the great majority of their associates have passed away, will recall him as "Inspector of the Port" (with commerce that was a laughable burlesque upon the present), and later as Justice of the Peace, with an office in the second story of the tumble-down wooden tenement (Clark's Hardware Store), on the north-east corner of Lake and Clark Streets, and directly facing the famous "Saloon Building," a history of which would be a history of almost all the public meetings, and gatherings, and societies of early Chicago.

Lewis C. Kerchival rises before me to-day as distinct as when I used to meet him in the streets, straight as a pine, unbending as an oak, defiant and tough as a hickory: with his tall, muscular form, his grizzled hair, blue, brass-buttoned coat, and his soldier-like bearing, proud as Julius Cæsar and imperious as the Czar; always neatly dressed, with cleanly-shaved face and—a *rara avis* in those muddy times—well-polished boots.

Should I compare him with any other well-known character it would be Andrew Jackson. The mental calibre of the men, as well as their *physique*, was much the same. Each knew and did not shrink from "taking the responsibility" of any act they thought right—had no dread of, perhaps never even gave a thought to the consequences. The "by the Eternal" of the President was the animus of the citizen, and I often fancied (as did others) that they were very alike in looks.

The hair of Col. Kerchival was a true index of his character. It was kept cut short, and every "particular one" of the dense growth stood stiffly, savagely erect, without depending upon, and as if scorning the support of, the others; and had an individuality of its own—had a gladiatorial presence and a challenge to combat. So, too, was it with the man. He appeared to snuff the battle from afar, like an old war-horse, and had the most sublime contempt for those who did not agree with him. There was something grand in his attitude, whether right or wrong, though it is very much to be doubted if he ever admitted the possibility of the latter. That would have been a human weakness, of which he could never have believed himself guilty. What *he* thought and said *must be right*, and it was impudence of the most gross character in any to question. And if the disputant happened to be young! Ah! then Lear was rivalled. But his passion was like

"A full hot horse, who being allowed his way,
Self-mettle tires him."

And he soon became the calm gentleman again; for under all the heat there was a tender, almost womanly heart, and the eyes that one moment flashed baleful lightnings would the next be misty with genuine tears.

Of the more than iron will, memory will reproduce many examples to the minds of those no longer young, whose eyes kindly rest upon these pages. A few are so strikingly

characteristic of the man that I cannot refrain from giving them place. And I do so the more willingly as one instance proves beyond all cavil his inward, native goodness, no matter how warped at times, and a determination for the right.

The habits of Mr. Kerchival, in the matter of drinking, had not been good. It was the crying sin of the era—the most serious blight upon the escutcheon of the fair young City. His indulgences had grown upon him. Inebriety became the rule rather than the exception, and a speedy and dishonored grave appeared to be his inevitable doom, unless there was a radical change. And it came when least expected by his friends. He decided to drink no more—and instantly stopped. Severe sickness followed, as a natural sequence to the sudden lack of stimulant; and when a physician prescribed and held the “poisoned cup” to his lips, and told him he must drink if he would live, the old Roman dashed it aside, and vowed “he would die before he tasted a single drop”—and he kept his word.

Subsequently he became the president of the Temperance Society, and one night, when a meeting was in progress, some one brought forward a negro to sign the pledge, his face flamed with indignation, he declared the meeting adjourned, and rushed from the room. It was touching him in a very tender spot. His hatred for a colored person was too intense for him to admit the slightest association. Indeed, it was laughable how peculiarly sensitive he was upon the subject, and his loathing was so great that had he then (his views became somewhat softened at a later date) been convinced that that particular race would have been admitted into heaven, he would have considered it a good and sufficient reason and ample justification for going in the contrary direction.

The same imperative will—the same strong, overmastering prejudice controlled his judicial acts and legal decisions, even more than he was himself aware. Though I believe

him to have been honest to his heart's core, yet there was an irresistible bias that sometimes ran away with his better judgment, and bordered upon the ludicrous, and he made law quite a different affair from that laid down in the statute book and held to be sound by higher authority. I give an instance:

It was claimed, and justly, that active firemen were exempt from street tax, and custom, at least, had made it binding. But "Squire Kerchival" argued otherwise. He permitted a suit to be brought against one of the "fire fighters" for the amount, and sternly overruled the exemption. Then the defense produced three of the most prominent physicians, who swore point blank, that on account of bodily injuries, the defendant was not able to work upon the streets and consequently not liable. There was nothing in rebuttal. But "the Squire" ignored the testimony entirely. He had made up his mind and that was sufficient—said "he had seen the defendant dance half the night, and any one who was able to dance was able to work on the streets, and he'd be (well, say blessed!) if he shouldn't either do it or pay!"—vowed he wouldn't permit an appeal, and forthwith issued an execution.

But nothing came of it; and his books, if now to be found, will reveal the judgment unsatisfied. Sober second-thought had shown him the impracticability and absurdity of his course, and I presume he laughed as heartily as did others at his high-handed defiance of law and testimony. It was simply one of the furious storms that the soonest clear the sky.

Next to, if not equal with his hatred of "our brothers carved in ebony" was that of dogs. He had the most mortal antipathy to them. They never entered into his conception of Paradise. In that particular, if in no other, he was "close communion," and would have cut off the best of his friends among the Red Men from the happy hunting-grounds, for their love of and close intimacy with their use-

ful four-footed companions. This feeling was no secret, and it was made use of to annoy the old gentleman, though truth to tell more from the fun that would arise out of it than malice.

The prime mover was Doctor —— (he might not fancy having his name given to the public, so I'll e'en whisper it very lowly and confidentially upon the solemn pledge that you'll "never tell nobody") — Doctor Max Myers. He caused an advertisement to be inserted in one of the papers, that Squire Kerchival was very anxious to purchase a good dog, and requested any who had one for sale to bring it to his office between the hours of nine and twelve upon the following day. And such a collection as appeared, *mirabile dictu'!* Dutch men, and dutch women, and dutch girls, and dutch boys from the neighborhood of "Lill's Brewery"; Milesian men, women, girls, and boys from the North, South, East, and West, and ragged juveniles from every alley. And dogs? No race appeared unrepresented. The "School Section" (old settlers will understand the meaning of the term) were in full force, terriers, Newfoundland, pointers, setters, hounds, bulldogs, "Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart," big, little, useful, worthless were all there, and the office was taken by storm, and the street crowded, and a human and canine Babel reigned and Bedlam was outdone!

But the reception they received! It beggars all the power of description, let imagination run riot ever so madly; the motley crowd was hurried, driven, hustled, not very gently. down the stairs amid the wildest jargon and carnival of denunciation, and curses, and vows of vengeance from Teutonic, Irish and—that was the feather that crushed the spine of the camel—colored lips; the door locked, and the scales of Justice that day left untended. And "wrathy" indeed was the Squire when he found it was a practical joke—blew hot and blew cold—but when the waves had lashed their fury out he bore no malice.

Despite his peppery temper, Lewis C. Kerchival—Colonel Kerchival—was a man to be respected. None of us are without faults, and his came from natural organization—from the want perhaps of proper training when young—from his head rather than heart. He was of the *ancient régime*—had the manners of a “gentleman of the old school”—the will that would have caused him to march triumphantly to the stake for a principle, and the nerve to endure torture without a groan. He was as much a part of his times as the buildings—has left a name that is indissolubly connected with Chicago—was true as steel in his friendships and when the sod was placed over him, many of what the world called “better men” would have been less missed.

URIAH P. HARRIS.

Nature created Uriah P. Harris for a fireman, and I am inclined to the belief that his playthings in the cradle must have been miniature trumpets, spanners, and wrenches, and that the first use he made of his limbs was to “run with the machine.” and of his hands, to hold a pipe and a butt! This may seem an idle delusion of the fancy, but the after-life of the man would appear to prove the theory.

Mr. Harris, I am quite confident, owed his nativity to New York City. During his younger days he was a member, and we may be certain an active one, of engine number 27, “Old North River,” and in the rough school of the Volunteer department, the constant calls for energy and courage, and the not unfrequent difficulties with rival companies, he learned, and learned well, the stern lessons that fitted him for his after career.

Upon his arrival in Chicago, he joined "Osceola, number 3," then having a house upon the river bank on the north side, at the foot of Dearborn Street—the "Kid Glove Company," as its enemies dubbed it. It was composed for the most part of the "solid men" of the North Division (with a few from the South side), and represented much wealth, and the very first of social standing; a distinctive feature it retained in a great degree to the very last, although the first members bore away the palm in these respects, and the names to be found upon its (then) roll stood and stand to-day as high as any in the city, and the paid department do no more severe work than was done by the "hand engines" then—if they equal it.

The coolness, the power to control and direct others, the far-sightedness, the quickness of decision, the knowledge of the fantastic moods of the flames, the scope and force of water, the best point of attack, the surest way to defeat, all belonged to Mr. Harris, and he was dowered with the strength and stamina to defy the excesses of heat, and cold, and exposure, inseparable to such a life.

All will remember him, for he was a part of the new as well as the old Chicago. His figure was tall and presence commanding—a shade too heavy in his later years for the arduous duty, but never shirking it. The strongest, the absorbing passion of his life was to be a fireman. It was his *beau idéal* of perfect manhood—the achme of human bliss—the highest aim of his ambition. No general ever felt more happy than he in marshalling his forces against the "devouring element"—none were more jubilant in victory.

But it must be remembered that his was no common conception of what constituted a true fireman. It had been the study of his lifetime—he had consecrated himself to it, as it were, and the one who reached his mark had to combine all the elements of daring, even to recklessness, coolness, amid the most trying circumstances, trained judgment, a quick eye, a firm hand, untiring muscle, an iron

constitution, to know by intuition what was right, and the nerve to carry it out, unheeding the clamor of the populace or the intermeddling of those who held *quasi* power in municipal affairs.

That Uriah P. Harris combined in a remarkable degree these rare qualities, his repeated election to the office of Chief Engineer (and no more important one can be adduced), I think, conclusively proves. In this even the outcry of party was strangled, and though there were plenty of seekers after the "loaves and fishes" connected with it, yet to the praise of Chicago be it recorded, the better judgment permitted no swelling and fury of political waves to turn them from what was believed their best interests and the most certain means of safety. The fiat was then, whatever it may be now, that life and property, when weighed against fire, was above and paramount to all party feeling.

I think, none will question the ability with which Mr. Harris managed fires. And it must be taken into consideration, how often and much he was crippled for want of necessary machines and an adequate supply of water. Human muscle is not as tireless as steam, human nature not as reliable as steel, human passions have no safety-valve that can be chained down and control them, humanity is ever subject to the overthrowing powers of jealousy, envy, malice, and insubordination. And all these were against him, at least in the early part of his career, and I remember well a remark from his lips, when the change came from the Volunteer department and breath of fire, lungs of steam and sinews of iron were substituted; when horses did the heavy labor of drawing and machinery of working—when men arrived at the scene of destruction without being already tired out.

"I tell you," he said, "steamers don't get exhausted or drunk, and can be depended on every time."

This was immediately after what was then termed "a great fire" (ah! how fearfully the memory of it was blotted out at a later day, when a second Sodom swept away acres

of buildings, and in a breath crumbled even the most substantial to ashes or melted them as wax in a thrice-heated furnace!) in Lake street (on the north side of the street between Clark and Dearborn), when tired nature strove to sustain itself by stimulants, and there was left behind a sad, sad record of destruction and death—heavy pecuniary losses and monumental-marbles in the graveyard.

Mr. Harris was a man of intense feelings and strong passions. They were the requisite fuel to drive him on in his chosen career, just as much as coal and wood are to the locomotive. Without them he could never have been what he was. But passion with him was no long-lingering feeling. It would have been impossible for him to have “nursed wrath to keep it warm.” He was too great-hearted for that. Beside his inherent love of mirth—his rollicking nature would never have permitted such a thing. His laugh was most hearty and contagious; his play boisterous, and the very corner-stone of his being was sociability. Condemned to a hermit life—sundered from genial companionship, he would have been the most unhappy of mortals and not long known to the living. As a Crusoe, he would not have survived to see a “Friday,” whether day or man! Generous he was to a fault—far too much so for his own good in a pecuniary point, and was something of a *gourmand* in eating, while exceedingly dainty in taste and not to be charged with gluttony. Like many men of his mould, he was tender-hearted—unusually so. Charity with him was more than a name—was not simply a spasm, but an ever-living and breathing reality, and tears in the eyes of woman, no matter who she might be, ever caused his own to flow.

Mr. Harris was perhaps too much of the order of *Sans Souci*, to have claimed the motto of Bayard, but to that can be attributed much of the personal popularity which, in connection with his ability in his chosen profession, enabled him so long to retain his high position as Chief.

His friends were very warm and lasting ones. He threw his whole soul into his intercourse, as indeed he did into everything else—was fond even to extremes of the amusements that go very far toward relieving the dullness of life—to compensate for its trials. A good horse had in him a good friend and protector, and the drama an ardent admirer. Indeed he was enthusiastic concerning it, and chess might almost have been called a passion. And, though the fact is probably not widely known, he was quite literary in his tastes.

His faults, whatever they may have been, sprang from an excess of warmth in his nature, from too much carbonic acid, I might say, in his organization, from impulse not to be resisted, from the whip and spur of too rapidly bounding blood—never from premeditated wrong. No one ever yet heard so hearty and spontaneous a laugh come from a villian's throat.

But whatever his errors, the mantle of that broad charity, with which he ever so liberally shrouded others, should be extended to him. His virtues counterbalance them, and it has been well written, "none are perfect, no not one." He has passed "beneath the veil," but will not soon be forgotten—cannot be. As long as there is a Chicago Fire Department, he will be remembered with pleasure. What it now is (without detracting one iota from the fame of others), he assisted greatly to make it, and no true fireman will hesitate to lay a wreath of asphodel upon his resting place.

HENRY B. CLARKE.

No one among the olden time hunters will ever pass the grave of Henry B. Clarke save reverently and with uncovered head.

Mr. Clarke was, *de facto*, one of the "old settlers." About forty years ago he erected his (then) famous mansion, dwarfing all others, on the South side of the river, and equalled only by that of William B. Ogden on the north—of which it was the rival. Its cost was some ten thousand dollars—a mere bagatelle now, but at the time was looked upon with alarm, and designated by many names, the most gentle of which was, perhaps, "folly." The building was fashioned after, and to a great degree a reproduction of, that of the first Mayor of Chicago (William B. Ogden, A.D. 1837), with broad, pillared porch; inviting, comfortable, substantial, and a marked object in the almost wilderness of prairie.

One can scarcely conceive, at this day, the enterprise and energy necessary to successfully carry out such an undertaking, when the city was yet in its swaddling clothes (with only about two thousand inhabitants), the country unsettled, the trail of the Indians yet unobliterated, their corn growing at "Wolf's Point," their camp fires nightly burning, and their war cry scarcely stilled; when skilled labor was difficult to command, and when much of the interior wood-work had to be transported from the State of New York. Indeed, everything taken into consideration, it might well have been looked upon as Herculean labor, and one bordering even upon insanity. But the South side

gloried in it, as they did in everything that tended, in the least, to break the somewhat arrogant power of the North, and lessen its prestige.

When Mr. Clarke builded his home it fronted to the East, and was sentinelled by tall Lombardy poplars—striking objects amid such surroundings. It was distant a mile and one-half from the nearest neighbor, was in a streetless plain, and to be reached only by the road along the lake shore—the highway from the Wabash. And it is recorded as an instance of his goodness of heart, and thoughtfulness for the welfare of others, that he every night hung out a lantern to guide belated and perplexed travellers, and save them from the treacherous and almost bottomless sloughs.

The location of the house was near the scene—a trifle to the south, if I remember correctly—of the massacre of 1812, and amid the mimic mountains of ever-shifting sand rested the bones of the soldiers ruthlessly slain by Indian treachery and—why should it not be written?—by the obstinacy and incompetency of white leaders.

Not here, perhaps, is the proper place to discuss the merits of that fatal evacuation of Fort Dearborn; but a decade and a half of years since investigation of the facts (after gathering the most authentic information possible) forced this conclusion: the massacre was the result of self-opinion, suspicion, and jealousy of inferiors, the destruction of stores, the want of knowledge of the Indian character and contempt of their power. But whatever the cause, its history was written in blood.

Mr. Clarke combined shrewdness with energy of character. He was a partner of William Jones and Byram King (notable names in the early history of the Garden City) in the Hardware business (on South Water Street), and a director in the Chicago Branch of the State Bank. In his later years he withdrew from active business associations, and devoted his time to the cultivation of the soil and to the sport his very soul loved—that of hunting; having

for companions such men as D. D. Stanton, Harvey Blakesley, L. C. Hugunin ("Len"), Ashley Gilbert, and others.

Judging from his treatment of me, and from what I heard from others, Mr. Clarke must have been a remarkably genial companion—one with command of self and one possessing the traits of character that make men loved while living, and when gone, remembered with tender regret. Certainly his friends were warm ones, though I fancy the number admitted to the very hearth-stone of his heart was not large. But those who enjoyed the privilege remained firm to the last—till, in 1849, the blight and mildew and doom of cholera fell upon the the City and swept him away.

He was a man of strong feelings, and remembered injustice very keenly. His early life had been passed amid the scenes that most truly "tried men's souls," for the business battle of those years was not what it is now—the means of transportation but as a pony express to the countless railway cars—or, as the speed of a tortoise to that of a greyhound. Money was scarce and hard to command; credit sat weeping amid the ruined altars of speculation, and when the crash of 1837 came, Mr. Clarke did not escape being crippled. This, and subsequent struggles, I think, must have somewhat distilled the gall of bitterness into his cup of life, and ever after shadowed it. But he was the possessor of a brave heart and high moral courage. The latter was shown upon his death-bed. He calmly faced the inevitable, gave minute directions about his temporal affairs, and designated the spot of his burial—that he should be placed beneath a spreading tree upon his own ground, and not consigned to the cheerless graveyard where the drifting sand hid all trace one day, and the next permitted the wind to blow upon the unearched coffin!

I know not if tree or grave remains now, so completely has the city swallowed up the surroundings—so much has

the vandal hand of "improvement" obliterated old and cherished land-marks. But I do know that in former days the grave of Henry B. Clarke was held in reverence by old settlers and huntsmen, and each in passing laid (at least mentally) a flower upon the grassy mound.

No man in whom the love of dogs and horses is as strongly developed, as was the case in Mr. Clarke, can ever be otherwise than warm-hearted and full of tenderness; but if, at times, bitterness fell from his lips, it was but the natural out-cropping of the trials through which he had passed. But it was a growth of tares that could never up-root the wheat—of weeds that were held in check by blossoms of humanity. Had he been thrown upon the extreme frontier he would have been foremost in the ranks of pioneers; had he been with Boone and Simon Kenton they would have had a brother who would have won an equal name, and never shirked trial or flinched danger. If more lapped in City life he would have sighed for gun and for freedom, and the leaves of the ledger would be irksome, no matter what the profits. As it was, his later life was a happy medium between the two extremes. He lived upon neutral ground between civilization and wilderness—could turn in a moment from one to the other, and when not actually engaged in agriculture his face was more often seen at the Calumet and the O'Plain than in Lake Street, and his gun more often heard on prairie and river than his voice upon the public square. For all his ambition in house-building he loved nature, primeval, better than right-angled streets and piles of brick and mortar; and believing, to the full, in the creed that "God made the country and man made the town," he gladly turned his back upon

"The cold, heartless city, with its forms
And dull routine; its artificial manners,
And arbitrary rules; its cheerless pleasures,
And mirthless masqueing."

Mr. Clarke belonged to the "old stock" that are rapidly fading away from the sight of men—but not to be forgotten. That can never be. Their names are written as with pencils of steel upon tablets of marble—written upon all of Chicago as indelibly as those of the Indians are upon headland, river, prairie, and waterfall. Every thought of the past brings them back—repeoples the earth again with the forms long since laid down to their silent rest. A few—a very few remain, with the furrows plowed by years upon their faces, and "the snow that falls but never melts" lodged in their scant hair; and it is a duty, as it should be a pleasure, not only for their children and children's children, but of all in Chicago to gather and garner all possible reminiscences against the time when their history will be more valuable than letters of gold.

There was a manliness about these old Argonauts—a self-dependence, an iron nerve, and unbending front of which we see but little now. Perhaps it is not called out. They were men to be relied on in every emergency, and among them Henry B. Clarke stood high-placed, and, as far as I ever knew, with unsullied character. He never (to the best of my recollection) sought or held public office—a striking commentary upon some that might be named, and on that very account left a purer record. He never could have been a sycophant for place or power—a Janus for loaves and fishes; and while he might, by so doing, have left more property, what he did was unmortgaged to political corruption and broken promises. From his life and those who stood shoulder to shoulder with him in the ranks, the "rings" of to-day may learn a lesson it would be for their benefit to ponder and remember, if they aim for a higher and nobler manhood. Aye, it would be well for the younger business men of Chicago to go to such graves as that of Henry B. Clarke and learn wisdom from their dust and ashes.

SAMUEL J. LOWE.

In the first Directory of Chicago (*Robert Fergus, Compiler and Publisher, A.D. 1839*), can be found the name of Samuel J. Lowe, "High Constable and Deputy-Sheriff," showing that he was a resident at an early day, but I have no means of deciding the exact time. He was twice elected Sheriff (1842 and 1844), and subsequently Justice of the Peace, an office, I think, he held at the time of his decease. He was twice married, and a number of his children still survive.

Mr. Lowe was of English parentage—and he was born, if recollection serves me rightly, in the mother country; and, though thoroughly Americanized in feelings, retained some of the traits that mark the subjects of Queen Victoria to the end. This, however, was only in manner, accent, and idiom. There was nothing of worship for the crown remaining. And—if indeed he had ever been much tinctured in that direction, which is exceedingly doubtful in my mind—all of early prejudice, and love, and reverence for royalty had been obliterated. He was a democrat at heart as well as in name—a strong partisan; and the "divine right," according to his belief, was vested in the people and not in kings—the *vox populi* paramount to the single will of man or woman. In fact he had little patience with any who boasted the superiority of England in any respect, and could scarcely tolerate them at his own table, although one of the most hospitable of men.

One instance of this came under my own immediate observation.

He, like all Englishmen (and are not "Yankees" the same if blessed with the slightest epicurean taste?) was fond of roast beef, and he was a good judge of the article in its primitive state, and knew when it was properly cooked. At dinner one day, at his house, were some genuine specimens of the newly arrived John Bull—sex, masculine; species, cockney—who, ignoring the etiquette and politeness of the occasion, indulged in egotistical bombast as to their native country, and were loud in condemnation of everything this side of the water. Mr. Lowe heard them in silence, though rising color told how unpalatable was the theme to him. Under other circumstances he might not have borne so patiently. In the role of host he was fettered, and endeavored again and again to turn the tide of conversation, but without success. And everything came in for censure, from the President and Cabinet down even to food, and the wholesale declaration was made (and that in the face of as prime a piece of beef as Straun ever fed and "Bill Gallagher" ever butchered, and which it would have been very difficult to duplicate in any market in the world) "that there was nothing fit to heat in this 'ere blarsted country," or words to that effect.

Quick almost as a lightning flash the hot blood surged to the very temples of Mr. Lowe. Not only his adopted country, but himself and his table, had been insulted, and by those partaking of his kindly proffered hospitality; and before second-thought came to his rescue he answered and asked: "Why, then, in the name of heaven, didn't you stay in England?"

That he regretted it afterward I know, although the reproof was richly merited, and he felt he had lowered himself to their level. However it mattered little. They were too thick-skinned to feel his virtuous indignation, and if the shaft was felt at all, consoled themselves with a double allowance of the beef that "was not fit to eat," and which was such a toothsome morsel as they had, probably, never feasted upon before in their lives.

And here (though out of place) I cannot refrain from introducing an anecdote of Henry G. Hubbard, as it bears directly upon the subject—he sharing with Mr. Lowe his disgust of such ill-breeding and ignorant assumption, and especially as it was first told me by the latter.

Mr. H. G. Hubbard was dining at the City Hotel (transformed from stores by the Hon. Francis C. Sherman “because they were built too far from trade!” and subsequently rebuilt and rebaptised as the “Sherman House”) with some of his friends, when a party of English (not English gentlemen and ladies—very far from it) who were seated opposite indulged in loud-mouthed vituperation of all things American. Mr. Hubbard listened quietly for a time and then with straight face, but eyes twinkling with mischief, began to describe to one of his friends (but intended for other ears) the severe trials of the early settlers of Chicago—how they had to go out upon the prairie, and dig under the snow for old buffalo bones, left by the Indians the previous summer, to make soup to sustain their lives, and much more to the same effect.

“‘Orrible! ’orrible!’” was the comment of the foreigners.

Mr. Hubbard seeing that the bait had been swallowed, enlarged his stories, and as the vulgarity of “Western people” had been harped upon, wound up by calling aloud to the waiter who was serving pudding:

“Here, bring me about a quart of that poultice and put on plenty of the ointment!”

That was enough for John Bull. They left in a hurry, and Chicago, as reported by them, must have had a hard name. But could they have heard the explosions of laughter that followed, and have known Henry G. Hubbard as did the others at the table, they might have been a trifle sceptical as to the information they had put down as “perfectly reliable!”

That Mr. Lowe possessed more than usual qualifications for Sheriff will not be questioned by any one familiar with

his character. He had firmness, coolness under the most trying circumstances, a quick, working, and decisive mind; was fertile in expedients and endowed with honesty that nothing could shake.

If specific proof of the latter were needed it could be found in his being among the first, if not the very first, selected to guard the specie while in *transitu* from the Government Land Office at Chicago to St. Louis. Of the danger, as well as the responsibility of the undertaking, at such an early day, when the means of conveyance was simply stage-coaches, often floundering through muddy prairie and "stuck" in muddy sloughs, those living in Illinois at the time will need no testimony. Organized bands of counterfeiters, horse thieves, and desperate men, versed in crime of every character, abounded. The "Regulators" had at best been only "scotched," not killed. For every head of the serpent crushed another was reared. The "Davenport murderers" were in their glory—the "Driscolls" flourishing and banded for evil with their brothers in infamy throughout the wide west. Every grove from Inlet and Paw Paw to the Wabash might have been said to contain *caches* of stolen goods and horses, the cellar of many a tavern, the bones of murdered men, and the "Hubbard Trail" was not unmarked by blood. In every respect it needed men of inflexible nerve and the most sterling honesty, for such an undertaking as the transportation of such a tempting lure, and to be among the number chosen was "proof as strong as holy writ" that the man was looked upon by his fellows as the right one in the right place.

And so it was with Samuel J. Lowe in all his business transactions, whether public or private. If as Justice of the Peace he ever erred in giving judgment, the fault arose not from a want of determination to do right at what ever cost—no matter who was to be mulcted, but from a failure to comprehend the intricate manipulation of keen-witted law-

yers, the wilful perversion of evidence, the almost impossibility to draw the line of demarkation between truth and falsehood. But he never was blinded by gold. Had he been, he would have died a richer man—have left perchance a more towering marble above his grave, but a less shining record upon it.

At the time he was Sheriff the office was the reverse of a bed of roses. It was not a very lucrative one—the jail was an old log building—eternal vigilance was truly the price of the safety of the prisoners—the city had police that were little better than a farce—was a chosen refuge for scamps—rail-roads were in their infancy—the State Prison was at Alton, and sentenced men had to be taken thither by stage, with daring confederates watchful and ever ready to aid them to escape, even at the cost of bloodshed; the journey was long—the roads (spring and fall) muddy, running through a sparsely settled country, and the price for their transportation did not admit a plethora of guards. But the record of Samuel J. Lowe challenges the assertion that he did not ever-faithfully keep watch and ward—that he failed to safely deliver, within the grim walls of Alton, every one entrusted to his care.

The starting of a lot of prisoners for State's Prison, as then manipulated, would be a curiosity in the Garden City now. Nearly opposite the jail (on Randolph Street, between Clark and LaSalle) stood the old, smoke and dirt begrimmed shop of "Jake Lower, Blacksmith." (I give the name from memory and spell it phonetically, and may be wrong in both, though I think not.) When the time came for departure, the stages of Frink and Walker were drawn up before the apology for a prison, the doomed men brought out handcuffed and with heavy shackles upon their ankles. Then "Jake" appeared upon the scene and *riveted* a bar of iron from one of the double fastenings to the other, and the men were bundled into the stage and whirled away to punishment under the care of keepers, the crack-

ing of the driver's whip and the shouts and cheers of the gamins.

In this connection, I might add that his official duty forced him to be present at and take part in the execution of John Stone for the murder of Mrs. Thompson (July 10, 1840), and, that, though the circumstances were particularly atrocious—the doom a just one—the culprit hardened and ribald—yet the inner heart of Mr. Lowe would gladly have turned him aside from seeing the death agony, even while his high sense of duty led to unflinchingly stand upon the scaffold.

The love of his adopted country was very strong in Mr. Lowe. It was shadowed forth during the Mexican war, and had he lived at the time of the "late unpleasantness" he would have thrown all his influence into the scale for the Union, and given liberally of his means. At one time (in the City of New York) I believe he was a member of a military organization, and his tastes ran strongly in that direction.

Circumstances that could not be avoided, duties and family cares that must ever be paramount in the heart of any true man, kept him from following the bent of his inclination, and going to the Mexican war. But he could compensate for his absence by giving of his children, and there was no mawkish sensibility about his so doing. Two at least of them burned to "revel in the halls of the Montezumas," and he bade them go and furnished the means for horses and all "the pomp and glory of war."

"But," said one, "in case our army should be beaten, driven back, and we forced to retreat, what then?"

"Then," was the reply, and, though jokingly uttered, intended in all its soundness, "then, if you come to Chicago, ride through it as fast as you can run your horse, and don't ever stop where I will see you again!"

And such words were not idle from his lips. With Jackson, I take it, he would have indeed stood as a "stone

wall"—with his countrymen at Waterloo, he would have been among the last Wellington would ever have been called to blush for.

I have spoken of his being a man of nerve, firmness, and coolness, and am confident he would have walked to the scaffold rather than given up a principle. Though far from being an athlete—not being above the medium size, and ungifted with any remarkable physical power, yet he never shrank from an encounter, if necessary, and in more than one instance, to my knowledge, arrested breakers of the law who had "whipped out" and defied others. This his own self-command and the rare faculty of controlling and intimidating others enabled him to do, and looking back through the data of memory, I fail to find a single instance where he resorted to weapons, though the necessities of his situation sometimes made it obligatory upon him to carry them. Indeed, I remember to have frequently heard him speak scornfully of others who did so and made a boast of it, and no more humane man in the treatment of prisoners could have been found, even while exercising all of firmness and permitting nothing "but what the law allowed and the court adjudged."

Of these things peculiar family associations, and the *entrée* of his house at all times and at all hours gave me a better opportunity than another to judge, for Mr. Lowe was a modest, reticent man, quiet in his speech and manner, and I never heard anything boastful fall from his lips. To know him, one must have been with him—to have read his character aright, have watched the details of his actions, and sought the mainspring of his motives—have looked at that which was hidden rather than at that which was revealed. Perhaps—and there are many who so judge of men—his penmanship was a true index to his character. It was rather stiff than graceful—precise to Quakerism—neat to a fault and legible as the cleanest cut type—was, as might be said, without a blot—was in perfect keeping with

the man. To compare it with the fashionable handwriting of the present would be to compare the beautiful Roman simplicity of these pages with the fanciful fonts that are elaborated almost to unintelligibility—and, if anything Mr. Lowe detested, it was “flourish.”

In the circle of his associates Mr. Lowe was noted for his hospitality. A courteous and genial welcome met all who visited him, and though naturally somewhat retiring, yet when business cares were thrown aside there were few more companionable men to be found. He was a member of the Masonic fraternity, and was always a welcome guest at the St. George and Yorkshire dinners. He was a regular attendant, if not a member, of the Episcopal Church.

Death came in the midst of his usefulness, and while he was still a young man—came at a time when he could but illy be spared by his family—came in a terribly painful manner. He bore all patiently and bravely, and left behind a name that will be remembered and honored.

Save his own immediate family no one saw his eyes close, save Darius Knights and myself. It was a trying, terribly painful scene. His disease was said to have been the same as that of Napoleon, and the “Hero of St. Helena” could not have more bravely faced the Destroyer, and, as far as mortal eyes could judge, with a more trustful heart and firm belief that for his soul the golden gates were already ajar.

May we sleep as well when for us the summons comes.

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Dear Mrs. Brady
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Bushnell, William H.
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OF THE

CITY OF CHICAGO.

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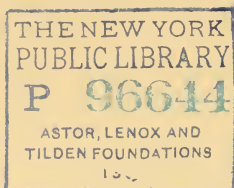
Jan. 1, 1881.

CHICAGO:

FERGUS PRINTING COMPANY,

244-8 ILLINOIS STREET.

1876.
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HON. WILLIAM H. BROWN.

[From the Chicago Magazine, March, 1857.]

To write a sketch of some living men which would be truthful and at the same time readable, which shall present their virtues in due relation to their faults, and as relieved by them, without injustice to the feelings of the parties concerned, is not an easy matter.

Some men are, like the head of a certain statesman, of which the phrenologist could make nothing, because he could find no "bump" about it—it was symmetrically smooth in every part—while others exhibit such decided traits of character, that inequalities are a matter of necessity. Their virtues and their failings alike exhibit themselves decidedly, and in natural correspondence with each other.

Mr. Brown, the subject of this sketch, is a man of marked and decided traits. What he knows, he knows; what he says, he means; and whatever subject comes before him elicits, without delay, a plump and square opinion. Such men must of necessity cross somebody's track, in the course of their lives, and will come to be somewhat differently regarded by different classes of people.

While, therefore, this sketch will endeavor to set forth Mr. Brown as he is, as far as it goes, it cannot of course enter upon such a discussion as would be called for were he not yet moving among us.

Mr. Brown is a native of the State of Connecticut, and was born about the beginning of the nineteenth century. His father was a native of Rhode Island; his profession was that of the law, which he practiced for some twenty-five years, at Auburn, N.Y., with decided talent and success, and then removed to the City of New York, where, a few years since, he died.

The son William, gained his education, as many young men of his time were accustomed to do, while the country was not as well supplied with schools of a high grade as at present, partly in the office of his father, and at various schools; but not extending it in youth, far beyond what are considered good business acquirements. He studied law with his father, and then engaged in its practice with him.

In December, 1818, about the time of his majority, as we infer, he came to seek his fortune in the farther or extreme West, as it

then was; and opened a law office in the old French town of Kaskaskia, in this State. His inducement to select Illinois as the State of his residence, he declared to be, that it had, in the summer of that year, adopted a *free* Constitution; without which he would by no means have taken a residence in it. In the spring of 1819, he was appointed a Clerk of the United States Court, which office he held for the period of sixteen years. The seat of government being removed to Vandalia, and the law requiring the Clerk of the Court to keep his office at the Capitol of the State, Mr. Brown followed it thither in December, 1820. He immediately purchased one-half the proprietary interest in a newspaper then published, and called "*The Illinois Intelligencer*." This paper dated back to 1815, and was the first newspaper ever established in the Territory. Mr. Brown entered upon its editorial duties, and continued in that connection until February, 1823. His partner in the paper was Mr. Wm. Berry, who was a member of the legislature of 1823; which legislature passed a resolution for a convention to alter the Constitution of the State, with a view to the introduction of slavery. The means, by which this resolution went through the legislature, were of a very high-handed character, which the reader will find somewhat illustrated on pages 52-3 of Ford's History of Illinois; and in a lecture delivered before the Historical Society of Chicago, by Mr. Brown.

Mr. Berry voted for this resolution, while Mr. Brown the editor was against it, and denounced it in such terms as he thought applicable to the case. Having prepared an article for the next paper, which exposed the scandalous measures by which the resolution had been carried through the House of Representatives, and having taken proofs of it, preparatory to its insertion, these proofs were surreptitiously taken from the office; and being read by the parties implicated, a storm was at once raised, such as is not uncommon, even in our day, when this same question of slavery is at stake. The usual remedy for such impertinent boldness was at once proposed, *viz.*: a mob, which should demolish the office, and send Mr. Brown about other business. Luckily, Mr. Brown had friends, and his friends had pluck; and their rally saved the office. The paper containing the awful exposition appeared; and was deemed such an indignity to the august body whose doings had been censured, that a resolution was adopted citing the author to their bar. To this citation Mr. Brown declined to answer; giving as his reason, that the Constitution secured the liberty of the Press: and so the resolution went over as unfinished business, and the wounded honor of the House was committed to the tender mercies of the time for its healing.

The partnership in the Illinois Intelligencer came to an end, by the sale of Mr. Brown's interest; and the paper advocated the convention—or in other words, the introduction of slavery

—for the next year. By some reasons, nevertheless, not made public, the paper was given into other editorial hands, some eight months before the vote was taken, and, during that time, did good service in the canvass for freedom.

As Mr. Brown had embarked in the cause of freedom in the State, and had determined to leave it, should the folly of re-introducing slavery prevail, he now gave most of his time to writing and working against that policy; and did much toward securing the verdict rendered in the 2000 majority which forbid its establishment; for which we who now dwell here, and our posterity, will owe him a debt of gratitude and honor.

In December, 1822, the subject of this sketch was married to Miss Harriet C. Seward, daughter of Col. John Seward, deceased, then of Montgomery Co., Ill. Mrs. Brown is the mother of four living sons and one daughter; of whom three are now in active business, and two in the course of their education.

Mr. Brown removed with his family to Chicago, in October, 1835, having been appointed cashier of a branch of the State Bank of Illinois, which had been created here in the winter of 1834. This position he had accepted with some reluctance, under the impression that his previous pursuits had not been of a kind to give him that knowledge of financial matters required in the charge of such an institution. In urging upon him the appointment, one of the principal stockholders remarked, that he possessed one qualification very necessary: in that he could say NO, as easily as most men could say YES. As soon as the proper arrangements could be completed, the bank commenced operations, and continued as the only institution of the kind till the year 1843.

The Bank prospered well under Mr. Brown's management, and might, perhaps, have been prospering yet, had the state of the country been anywise settled and healthy. But the serious derangements commencing in 1836, or rather back of that period, in the financial affairs of the nation, carried away bank, and business, East and West; and the Illinois State Bank did not escape. It suffered great losses, and these, with adverse legislation, induced the stockholders to wind it up. The Chicago branch suffered with the rest; for real estate was forced upon it in place of money. Yet, in the aggregate, it was so managed that the profit and loss would have shown a balance on the right side.

At the time of Mr. Brown's arrival in the State, its population was not over 40,000; and none, or next to none, of them lived north of the present limits of Bond County. When he came to Chicago, it was a village of about two years' growth, and contained about 2000 people. All Northern Illinois was a wilderness; and, two years later, the whole north half of the State was included in one congressional district; and sent Hon. John T. Stuart, of Springfield, to Congress; electing him over his com-

petitor, Stephen A. Douglas, who, on that occasion, made his first appearance on the stage in pursuit of political honors. The writer of this sketch cast his first vote in Illinois against Mr. Douglas, at that time, and made one of the five majority which defeated him.

In the conduct of such an institution, through times such as these, there were two things which it were impossible to secure together. One was the safety of the institution, and the other, the good-will of all the community. Everybody was in a condition of suffering, and wanted money, with an intensity that could take no denial; and the very urgency of the want, pointed, in no inconsiderable number of cases, to the very reason which made it unsafe to accommodate them. The Cashier of a bank must of necessity look to the safety of his trust. If he is faithful to that, no matter whether *no* is an easy word to him or not; he is forced to make the two letters which compose it, current in his institution. *No*, is not a popular word, with men who wish to borrow money, especially if they wish to borrow it very much; as those then did, who wanted to borrow it at all. Mr. Brown's peculiar qualification already mentioned perhaps conduced more to the safety of his trust, than to his popularity for the time being. But integrity and decision vindicate themselves sooner or later, and he has lost little in the long run. Indeed the men who supposed themselves to suffer from lack of a decision in their favor, would now often choose him as the very man to take charge of a trust of their own, had they one, requiring sagacity and decision united with integrity in its management.

The building, in which the bank was kept, stood at the S.-W. cor. of LaSalle and South Water Sts.; and is well remembered by all the oldest residents of the city. It has only disappeared within the last four or five years.

While the bank was in operation, Chicago was confined principally to the vicinity of the river. The dwellings even, did not stretch far away from the centre. In the spring of 1835, a three story brick building, probably 117 Lake street, was erected, and finished in the fall, and then filled with goods by Breese and Shepherd. It was the general impression that the stand was too *far from the centre* of business, and would prove a bad speculation.

Mr. Brown has been a professor of religion in connection with the Presbyterian Church for many years. He sustained the office of ruling elder in that connection in Vandalia, and has held the office from 1835, or nearly the entire period of his residence in this city; and is as well acquainted with ecclesiastical, as with legal business. He has constantly been a staunch supporter of his own branch of the church; and a reliable helper in any thing properly claiming his aid in any other connection.

The first church edifice of the Presbyterian connection was erected upon the alley on Clark Street; between Lake and Randolph, on the West side of the street, (54 Clark street,) where the firm of S. H. Kerfoot & Co. are now situated. The building fronted towards Lake St.; and a large slough run diagonally through the lot in front of the Church, which, on rainy Sabbaths, and in wet times, was bridged by benches from the Church. The writer of this, has a distinct recollection of thus reaching the interior of this place of worship. This church, was at the time, the only one erected by any denomination; though the Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians, all had a church organization; and the Catholics had a small Chapel near the corner of Washington Street and Michigan Avenue. A few families lived on the north side of the river, and a few stores of goods had been opened there. The town had no sidewalks; and mud of no very certain depth, was plenty, and easily reached. Nothing like a harbor existed; and vessels were accustomed to lie outside, and unload by lighters.

In 1840, Mr. Brown was appointed School Agent; an office which involved the care of the funds for School purposes in this city. His election was almost accidental; being by a majority of one only of the Whig party, with which he always acted. His acceptance was on the condition, that his services should be gratuitous; and this very likely contributed to keep him in the office, at a time when party greed watched for every post of profit, however small, very much as hungry dogs watched for bones, without regard to their size, or the sort of animals to which they belong. Perhaps the city never made a more fortunate hit, either by blunder or design; for the state of our Schools hitherto had been most deplorable. The School Fund was all unproductive; having been let, for the most part, to parties who had failed to pay, either principal or interests. There were no school-houses fit for use, and the whole matter of Schools was in a decidedly helter-skelter condition. The real era of a change dates with the election of Mr. Brown to this office of School Agent. Confidence began at once to revive; for all parties, even the hungry ones, felt that the fund *was now safe*.

It was no small labor to collect the scattered fragments of the fund, and put them in shape to be productive; but it was accomplished: and though Mr. B. devoted twelve or thirteen years to this business, in connection with his other affairs; loaning it out as it was collected, he never made an uncollectable debt. The Schools gradually assumed tone and character; suitable houses were built, and the system, as it now is, gained shape and consistency.

At the time of his resignation of the office of School Agent,

in view of his gratuitous services, the Common Council of the city passed the following resolutions:

Whereas, In the resignation of Wm. H. Brown, late School Agent, the community have lost the services of a faithful, diligent, and meritorious officer; one who for the long period of thirteen years has bestowed a paternal care—to the fostering and judicious management of that sacred trust—the School Fund; and

Whereas, Although the unsolicited expression of public approbation may not add one iota to the already established character of the individual, who is the object of it; yet we believe that a testimonial of this nature, may afford to any honorable mind a feeling of pleasure and gratification on retiring from office, with the unbiased verdict of well done thou good and faithful servant.

Thereupon be it resolved by the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Chicago in Common Council assembled.

That we tender to Wm. H. Brown, late School Agent, our fullest expression of respect and approbation, for the correct and judicious manner in which, for such a long period of years, he has fulfilled the duties appertaining to his late position.

Resolved, That in the economical execution and careful attention, with which the late agent has performed his official requirements, we have presented, for the future guidance of his successor, an example well worthy of imitation; and in which we discern the very unusual occurrence of a public office being held by one individual for so long a period, more for the promotion of a laudable and praiseworthy object, than for the emoluments attached to it.

Resolved, That for the more fully carrying out the intention of this Preamble and Resolutions, they be entered on record, and a copy presented to the subject of them."

Mr. B. was one of the first Inspectors of Common Schools, elected under the city charter; and was in that Board for twelve or thirteen consecutive years. This Board of inspectors has been the instrument and agency, and in good degree the cause of our present School System. He was a constant and punctual attendant at its sittings, and a leading and influential member of it; and is entitled to his share of the credit of what it has done.

In the winter of 1846, in connection with a few others, Mr. Brown purchased the original charter of the Galena and Chicago Union Rail Road, from the Estate of E. K. Hubbard, Esq., then lately deceased. Measures were immediately taken to put on foot a working Railroad in the Northwest. A little piece of road had been built before Mr. Hubbard's death, but it was never worked, and went to decay. To start this Galena Road

was an undertaking of no small labor. The country was poor: there were no Rail Roads anywhere in the West; and nobody had much faith in them, nor in fact in anything else. So completely had all confidence been wrecked, in the great revulsions of 1836, and onward, that nobody was willing to embark in any new scheme, either with effort or capital. The extent to which this was then true, cannot be conceived of now, by those who have no experience in that chapter of our history. This Galena Road was therefore looked upon as a very doubtful affair; and any amount of writing and cyphering, conventioning and speech-making, was necessary to get it started. The farmers in the country, who had felt in all their bones, as well as pockets, the need of some means of getting to market with their crops, were much more alive to it than our city property holders; who had saved what little they had out of the fire, so to speak; and who did not like to risk it again beyond their fingers' ends. But the farmers were poor and able to take but little stock; and as the citizens would not risk much, the road was begun on a rather small scale. Mr. B. became one of the largest subscribers to the stock, and is yet one of the most extensive of its stockholders. He has always been a Director of the Road, and is now its Vice-President. He has therefore had ample opportunity to aid in giving shape to the policy under which that Road has been managed.

Mr. Brown was the very man to have a hand in that undertaking. Cautious to a degree verging on excess: knowing the full value of every dollar that passes through his hands: and constitutionally determined that every dime shall do its own duty, he was the very man to aid in the beginning of a road, without adequate means and without confidence, and carry it forward, step by step, to success. The first twelve miles of the road only cost about \$6000 per mile; but the first twelve miles told the story, for they showed that the road could be built, and would pay. This road has been the goose that has laid our golden eggs. It is the mother of all the rest in our Northwest.

Mr. B. is a man of capital. He had acquired a competency before his removal to this city, and since that time, with the exception of the perilous years succeeding 1836, has been constantly adding to the amount. He early became possessed of considerable tracts of real estate, which has of late, very rapidly enhanced in value. He has entered into no rash speculations, nor made any desperate pushes for fortune. He takes care of what he has; and adds to it when he can do so with safety. He has never entered so largely upon building as have some others, but has expended considerable sums in that way at one time and another. His late residence, at the N-W. cor. of Pine and Illinois Streets, North Side, he erected at a cost of ten thousand dollars, in 1836; and it was, at that time, considered

the best house in the city. He is now building a residence, with front of Athens marble, on Michigan Avenue, to cost about thirty thousand dollars. As to his present possessions, he is not a man who makes any exhibition of his property. His answer to a question regarding it, was, that the inquirer would have "to guess as to the amount." Our guess therefore is, that it will not fall below \$500,000, and may go to twice that sum, or even above that.

Mr. Brown is personally a tall, well-formed man, with a slight stoop of the shoulders; with a keen dark eye, and hair once black as the raven, but now inclining to iron gray. When young, he is said to have been a very fine-looking man, and we can well believe it, for he holds his honors very well as yet.

Mr. Brown is a *giving* man; being applied to, perhaps, in aid of more charities than any one man in the city; and perhaps he answers to as many, or more, than any man. But he is not *naturally* a giver, for his *motto* is, to keep what he has: and his native answer to all applications, when that answer does not flow through the channel of his christian principles, would very likely be his easy *No!* His manner is often *brusque*; but his heart is kindly; and though he who comes to him for an object not wholly explained, may be chilled by the perpendicularities of a nervous impatience, which explodes suddenly: he has only to wait for the flow of kindness and good sense, which is sure to come, to be reassured.

Mr. Brown has the talent of good common sense; one most certainly of which the world has need, as fully as of any other; this, with his inflexible integrity, gives him a position in regard to trusts, both public and private, held by few men in our city. He is now in the midst of well ripened middle life, and yet in active duty—a large part of it connected with these trusts, of various kinds, put into his hands. We say of him, as Horace said of Augustus—we forget the Latin of it—but the meaning of it is, "Late may he go hence."

Mr. Brown died in Amsterdam. Holland. June 17. 1867. aged 72 years.

HON. WILLIAM H. BROWN.

BY R. W. PATTERSON, D. D.

THE present writer has been requested to add to the foregoing sketch of Mr. Brown's life such facts as may be within his knowledge. Being obliged to depend solely on his own memory, he cannot hope to give such interesting particulars as may probably be known to other parties.

During the financial troubles of 1857-1860, Mr. Brown carefully managed his affairs, and escaped serious embarrassment, having, as usual, kept out of debt, and taken good care of his property. In the year 1860, he was elected a member of the House of Representatives in the State Legislature. In this position he acquitted himself honorably and usefully, being among the most industrious, judicious, and influential members of the body.

In the great struggle for the preservation of our government, which may be said to have commenced in a decided form in 1856, and which culminated in the memorable rebellion in 1861, Mr. Brown, as might have been expected, was deeply enlisted for the cause of liberty and the Union. During the Presidential canvass of 1860, he took an active part in support of Mr. Lincoln, and was as much elated, perhaps, as any man by the success of the Republicans. When, however, the rebellion of the Southern States became a certain fact, and internal war was inevitable, he was very much depressed, feeling, as he often said to the writer, that no one could predict the end. But he had faith in God, and had no doubt that it was the duty of every good citizen to stand for the defence of the right and the support of good government at whatever sacrifice. He cheer-

fully paid his taxes to the Government, incurred by the war, and gave up his sons to the service of his country without a murmur.

After the war, as age was advancing upon him, Mr. Brown retired, in part, from business; devoting himself, chiefly, to the management of his own property. But he never lost his interest in the public welfare, and never gave up his positions in the several Boards of trust with which he was connected, such as those of the Chicago Orphan Asylum, and the Insane Asylum at Jacksonville. He continued to be active and faithful as a member and an elder of the Second Presbyterian Church until his departure for Europe, shortly before his death. He several times represented the Presbytery of Chicago in the General Assembly as a Ruling Elder, and was widely known in the denomination as among the most reliable friends of its enterprises. For many years, he was a corporate member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, to whose funds he was a large contributor during his life, and by a handsome provision in his will. And the cause of Home Missions had few, if any, more generous helpers. He was deeply interested, also, during all his later years, in the Mission Sunday School work, and in the Bethel cause, while in his own particular church he was always among the foremost givers, and the most devoted and steadfast supporters, being uniformly in his place on the Sabbath and in the weekly prayer meeting, as well as on special occasions.

In the summer of the year 1866, Mr. and Mrs. Brown left Chicago on a tour to Europe, partly for pleasure and partly on account of his failing health. During this trip, his keen relish for new scenes, and his habit of activity, led him to exert himself beyond his strength. After traveling through Great Britain and extensively through the countries of Europe, he occasionally exhibited signs of exhaustion, and in Amsterdam, Holland, he was taken with the small-pox. When he seemed almost recovered from this distressing disease, and was preparing to resume his travels, he was suddenly seized with paralysis, and shortly sank under it, dying peacefully on the 17th of June, 1867, at the age of 72 years. In the early part of August, following, the writer visited the old Bible House and the room

in which Mr. Brown's spirit took its flight, went to his grave, and saw the coffin that contained all of him that was mortal.

In the autumn of that year, his remains were transferred to their final resting-place in Graceland Cemetery.

His widow, Mrs. Harriet C. Brown; his four sons, S. Lockwood, Charles B., Theodore F., and Frederick, and his daughter, Mrs. Mary Tyler, survive him, and are still residents of Chicago.

I trust I shall be pardoned if I now add some of my own personal recollections and impressions of Mr. Brown, as I knew him in his public and private relations.

It was my privilege to become acquainted with Mr. Brown in the year 1833, when I was a student in Illinois College, although I had known him, by reputation, for a considerable time before. For he was a prominent citizen of this State almost from its admission into the Union, having become a citizen in the Territory while he was yet a very young man, and having risen to a position of distinction and public usefulness before he had reached the age of twenty-five years. Being, when I first saw him, among the more noted friends of church music in the State, he was invited to attend a musical convention at Jacksonville, which was held immediately after the annual commencement in the College. In this way I was first drawn to him as being interested in a subject that always engrossed a share of my own thought and attention. After that occasion, I kept up a knowledge of his movements until the year 1840, when I met him again in Chicago, where he had already resided for some years, and was an officer in the First Presbyterian Church. During the summer of that year, I learned more of his personal traits and peculiarities than I had known before, and was more than ever attracted to him. From that time onward until his death, I knew him intimately as a friend and as an Elder in the church of which I was Pastor from its organization in 1842, till the year 1873, six years after his decease in Europe. It will thus be seen that I had an opportunity of special acquaintance with Mr. Brown, such as few others enjoyed. And still cherishing his memory with the warmest regard, I take pleasure in adding this small contribution to the memorial of him, which it is the desire of his

family and friends to put on permanent record in this volume.

I have known well and long many of Mr. Brown's attached friends, among whom were Joseph Eccles, Esq., of Hillsborough, Hon. Samuel D. Lockwood, formerly of Jacksonville, and who died two years ago at Batavia; Hon. Thos. Mather, Hon. John T. Stuart, John Todd, M.D., and Rev. John G. Bergen, D. D., of Springfield; President Abraham Lincoln; Rev. William K. Stewart, of Vandalia; and Rev. Thuron Baldwin, D.D., late of New Jersey. A man who commanded the confidence of such gentlemen must have possessed excellences of no ordinary class. Especially deserving of mention was the life-long intimacy between him and Judge Lockwood, one of the purest and noblest men Illinois ever numbered among her jurists and citizens. Only a year before Judge Lockwood's death, in conversation with the writer, he referred in the most affectionate terms to his lamented friend, Mr. Brown, whom he was accustomed to visit every month during all the later years of his life. I well remember the estimation in which Mr. Brown was held by the older citizens of the State—lawyers, physicians, clergymen, and others, such as Judge Pope, Benj. Mills, Esq., Dr. Newhall, Hon. David A. Smith, and Rev. John M. Peck, D.D.

Among the notable traits of Mr. Brown's character were the following:

1. He was fair and conscientious in his political commitments and action. He was decided in his convictions, first as a Whig and then as a Republican, but never did I know or hear of his espousing the cause of a notoriously bad man of his own party. He may on some occasions have quietly voted for one man of questionable character, but of good principles, in preference to another worse man whose principles he deemed erroneous and mischievous. But he never warmly supported a corrupt man of any party. And he always urged the nomination of good men. He was not a political partisan, but a true, generous patriot.

2. Mr. Brown was a sincere philanthropist. He abhorred those levelling ideas of equality that would destroy all the rights of property, and break up family and social ties as established at present in civilized communities. But he earnestly

contended for individual and political liberty, and while he never favored what seemed to him impracticable schemes for the emancipation of the enslaved, he firmly resisted the efforts that were made for the introduction of slavery into this State, and did more, perhaps, than any other man to avert that great curse from Illinois, when parties were nearly equally balanced; thus saving the State for the cause of freedom—an event, that, in its consequences, probably turned the scale in favor of our national government in the recent bloody strife between the North and the South. Mr. Brown was not a sentimental philanthropist; he carefully inquired how he could do the most for humanity at large, instead of yielding to every momentary impulse on the presentation of distress. Thus he co-operated with every well-devised endeavor to provide for the needy and the suffering, while he sometimes turned away the improvident beggar. He was a foremost friend of orphan asylums, hospitals, and other kindred institutions established by the State or by private beneficence, doing always his full share to help them. He was philanthropic on principle, and not from mere impulse.

3. He was, in general, a liberal and useful member of society. He gave generously to every cause that commended itself to his judgment, while at times he firmly rejected applications that seemed to him unworthy of patronage. It would be difficult to name a good enterprise begun in Chicago, during his residence in the city, for which he did not contribute. And he was an active helper in a great number of patriotic endeavors. I used to think there was scarcely another man in Chicago whose name was found high up on more subscription papers, or who was a member of more committees and boards organized for beneficent purposes.

4. Mr. Brown was scrupulously honest and trustful in every relation of life. I never knew him to be accused of unfairness or deception in any business transaction. I never heard a suspicion breathed against his integrity. I never met with a person who ventured to charge him with untruthfulness or prevarication. He always seemed to me unusually fair and candid in his statements of facts. I am sure I express the judgment of all those who knew him best when I say that he was extraordinarily exact in his adherence to the requirements of truth and

justice, both in speech and conduct. This would hardly have been denied by his bitterest enemy.

5. He was naturally conservative, but never seemed to regard public opinion, when his duty required him to assume unpopular ground. He never betrayed any cause to which he had pledged his support, however misrepresented and misunderstood it may have become. And yet he was open to conviction in regard to the wisdom of any measure that he might have formerly sustained or refused to further by his money or personal influence. He was not vacillating in his judgments, for he usually considered every subject carefully before he formed his opinions respecting it. But I always expected to obtain a fair hearing when I undertook to present reasons for any view of a subject which I knew he did not favor; and in several instances he changed his grounds sooner than I had hoped for. In business matters, he was, perhaps, too conservative for such a city as Chicago; but, on the whole, his slowness to fall in with the prevailing estimates of property was, it may be, a good safeguard to his financial interests, and it tended to moderate the enthusiasm of the speculative spirit in times of dangerous inflation. Had he lived, he would, no doubt, have passed through this present trying crisis without disaster to his private fortunes.

6. Though not a man of brilliant mental powers. Mr. Brown was possessed of excellent practical judgment. He was not liberally educated, but he was not ignorant of books, and knew much more of the world than most men of more varied learning. His opinion in regard to matters of Church, State, or business, was always worthy of consideration. In fact, he seldom made a great mistake. I relied on his practical judgment, especially in trying situations, as on that of few other men; for he was scarcely ever carried away by temporary excitement, and he never lost sight of the main interests involved in any question, personal or public. Hence his counsel was often sought in relation to practical difficulties, both in church and in private affairs.

7. He was a most agreeable gentleman in social intercourse, and was warmly regarded as a personal friend. Those who knew him only slightly had but little idea of his power of

imparting interest to a social circle. His conversation was always entertaining, and hence his presence was sought and valued in general society. His house was the favorite resort of many gentlemen and families, who were attracted by his generous hospitality and the cordiality of his excellent lady.

As a friend, Mr. Brown could be safely trusted in all emergencies. He never flattered, and at times seemed cold and unsympathetic; but in the season of need he was uniformly a ready helper, and he could be relied on to speak kindly of you behind your back, if he professed friendship to your face. He could disagree with you without any breach of friendship. For he knew how to distinguish between great and little things. I sometimes thought it my duty to dissent from his opinion and to contend with him in regard to points of difference. But I could never see that it made any change in his subsequent deportment towards me. As a friend he was not demonstrative, but he was eminently true.

8. Mr. Brown was a man of positive opinions in regard to the character of others, but his judgments were, on the whole, charitable. He sometimes spoke severely of others, but not without apparent reason. He was, for the most part, careful in his utterances respecting his neighbors, and if he said anything unfavorable, it was usually qualified by some kinder expression. He was, by no means, guilty of double-dealing in his intercourse with men. If he was not always exactly tender of the reputation of others, he was usually reserved in the expression of adverse judgments, and almost uniformly he spoke kindly and commendingly of his neighbors and fellow-citizens. He was not a mischief-maker, and frequently merited the name of a peace-maker.

9. From intimate knowledge of Mr. Brown's principles, convictions, feelings, and conduct in a great variety of relations, I can truly say that I believe him to have been a sincerely and thoroughly *Christian* man. His religion was not impulsive, and he made no loud professions of zeal and spirituality. But I was always impressed with his evident depth of conviction in regard to the truth and claims of the Gospel, the purity of his Christian aims, the honesty and simplicity of his devotions, and his unfeigned and practical consecration to the service of the

Church and of his Lord. Few men have led more consistent Christian lives. His dying breath was one of prayer, and undoubtedly "he entered heaven with prayer."

In all that has been said, it has not been designed to assert or imply that Mr. Brown was, in the ordinary sense, a popular man. He had a certain severity of manner, in his intercourse with strangers, and sometimes with friends, that caused him to be misunderstood and misjudged. He did not sufficiently study the amenities of life, and he paid the temporal penalty of this neglect. Contrary to the common rule, he was most esteemed and loved by those who best knew his inner life. It was necessary to get through the outer shell to the real man to appreciate the nobleness of his character. Those persons who did this, will fully justify all that I have said of him.

Mr. Brown's memory will be blessed, not only by his own family, but by many friends, who felt, when he died, that a good and really great man had fallen, and who will keep his virtues embalmed in their hearts, when the blander traits of many more pliant men who were more widely applauded in life will be forgotten.



Dr. J. H. Hall & Sons, 600 N. 1st St.

D. M. Raymond

BENJAMIN W. RAYMOND, ESQ.

[From the Chicago Magazine, April, 1857.]

Late in the seventeenth century, a few Huguenots, driven from France by persecution to England, settled afterwards in New England. The subject of this sketch is a descendant from these, on his father's side. He was born in Rome, Oneida county, New York, in 1801; and was the son of Benjamin Raymond, who, as early as 1796, left his birth-place, Richmond, Berkshire county, Mass. His mother was a daughter of Thomas Wright, one of the brothers of that name who, emigrating from Weathersfield, Conn., were among the first settlers of Rome, which was long known as Wright's Settlement, in the wilderness of the then West. His father was engaged for some years in connection with the late Judge Wright, (afterwards chief engineer of the Erie canal,) in surveying into townships the northern counties of New York: and which were then all a wilderness, from the Mohawk River northward to the St. Lawrence. He selected the site of the town of Potsdam, in St. Lawrence county, where he lived for several years, and where he held the office of Judge for the county. He died in 1824, in the state of Delaware; being then engaged as engineer upon the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal.

The early years of Benjamin W. were spent with an aunt in Whitestown, New York, having lost his mother at the age of five years. When he had reached the age of ten, he was taken home to pursue his education in an academy which his father had established; having erected, at his own expense, a building to be used for the purpose of a high school and of public worship. Here he spent four years, dividing his time between school and the duties of a clerk in a village store. He also spent a good part of a year at school in Montreal, boarding with a French family where no English was spoken.—Afterwards he resumed his clerkship at his father's store, in Norfolk, St. Lawrence Co., and wound up his school attendance in the study of practical mathematics, particularly surveying, which he afterwards practiced to some extent.

His introduction to the more responsible cares of business took place at the age of nineteen, when he was sent down the Ratchett River, into the St. Lawrence, to Montreal, with a large quantity of lumber, which he was to sell and account for, and

in which he acquitted himself to the full satisfaction of his employer. About two years after this, he purchased a small stock of goods, and commenced business on his own account: but his father dying soon after, he was left, at the age of 22, the eldest of nine orphan children, without other means of support than his small stock of goods, purchased on credit, and sold, of necessity, under all the disadvantages of a new country without currency, or other means of purchase; and dependant on a barter of crude commodities for whatever trade was done. As his eldest brother was but thirteen years of age, he soon saw the impossibility of sustaining the family at Norfolk, and so closed his business at that place, in debt to his largest creditor to the amount of \$600, (which was paid in instalments some years afterwards), and started for Oneida county, once more to try a new tack for his life voyage. Here, a clerkship introduced him to a partnership in business with Mr. Wm. Wright, one of the oldest merchants at Rome, which was continued for three years. A feeling of responsibility on account of his orphan brothers and sisters induced habits of the strictest industry and economy, and led him to adopt those principles of temperance to which he has ever since adhered. The circle of young men into which he had been thrown in St. Lawrence county were dissipated, and their gayety was not without a charm for young Raymond. But when returning to Oneida county he firmly resolved to leave all such associates behind, and to seek for the future only the society of the strictly virtuous. Temperance societies were not yet invented; but Mr. Raymond made a pledge for himself, and has kept it to this day.

It was here, during the great revival of religion, in which Rev. C. G. Finney figured as the chief preacher, that Mr. Raymond made a profession of religion, early in the year 1826.

One of the first Young Mens' Temperance Societies in the State was formed at Rome, and Mr. Raymond at once relinquished the sale of liquors, though it was a very important source of profit to the merchant at that time. That was in 1828

In 1831, Mr. Raymond formed his first acquaintance with his future friend and partner, Hon. S. N. Dexter; and very soon after turned his steps westward, determined to seek his fortune in what was then the *far west*; with a promise from Mr. Dexter that if he should find a good place near the western lakes for settlement and trade, he would supply him the capital necessary for a commencement of business. In this journey he pushed westward through northern Ohio and Michigan, as far as White Pigeon; the last twenty-five miles of which was reached on the back of an Indian pony, guided partly by lead of an Indian trail, and partly by the course of the sun. He found plenty of persons who, like himself, were in search of places for the sale of goods, but very few who promised to be

purchasers, and so turned backward as far as the town of East Bloomfield, in Western New York, where he once more commenced business. Here he spent four years in a successful trade, connected with the purchase of wool. Here, also, one of the most important steps of his life was taken, in his entrance into the matrimonial relation with Miss Amelia Porter, of East Bloomfield, his present wife; a step which has probably had as much to do with his success in life, and the position he now occupies, as any other. Mrs. Raymond was the mother of two sons, one only living, and now a professor in Williams College.

Finding that his business did not allow of much expansion at East Bloomfield, he began, in 1835, to look once more westward, and Chicago being then somewhat talked about, he at once fixed his attention upon this place, being confirmed in the idea, from its natural position upon the map, that it would at some time be a place of importance; and also from a remark he once heard from Hon. De Witt Clinton; whose sagacity in regard to such matters was seldom at fault.

In January, 1836, he therefore set out by stage for Chicago, being provided with authority to draw upon his friend Dexter to the amount of \$10,000, if he chose to do so, for purposes of joint investment in real estate. After some looking at Milwaukee and elsewhere, and investing his \$10,000, he returned, closed up his business in N. Y., and set his stake in Chicago about the 1st of June, 1836; having been preceded by a large stock of goods; which, however, having to go by sail vessels around the Lakes, did not arrive until July. The city was at that time running over with merchandise, wanting nothing but purchasers. Such a class of merchants, too, as were a portion of them, never seen elsewhere: being mere adventurers, who had, by hook or by crook, and commonly by both, got possession of their stocks; their next aim was to get rid of them at whatever price could be had.

This disheartening and ruinous condition of things, left but a poor chance for him who thought only of a legitimate trade, which should turn his stock into cash.—Mr. R. was therefore obliged to look about him for other avenues to help off his goods. He established a branch at Milwaukee, one at Geneva, in Kane Co., and another at DesPlaines, on the Canal.

The disasters of that period, commencing in August, 1836, were under full headway for about three years, and came especially upon such as had made purchases of real estate, with notes to mature from time to time. The fall of 1837 found the firm of B. W. Raymond & Co. minus the ability to meet their engagements by about \$15,000, in addition to their loss of capital, amounting to as many more. This was a state of things with a bad look to it, and was fully made known to his partner; but Mr. Dexter was a man with a back bone in him, and nobly sustained the house with \$20,000, as it was called for, during the

years 1837-8-9; so that, by attention to meeting and securing liabilities as they accrued, the credit of the house was unshaken and their business uninterrupted during the whole period of that terrible depression. From the year 1838 to 1843, business was good, and the firm had so far retrieved its condition that Mr. Raymond determined to make an effort to put himself square with the world again.

For this purpose he sold out his stock of goods, receiving one-half in cash and in paper running six months, and the balance in real estate. This latter consisted of sixty feet on Clark street, including the old Post Office on the alley of the Sherman House Block, which was valued at \$5000. By this sale, and by collecting dues, and by turning over all his interest in the real estate owned by the firm, to his partner, who was the largest creditor—Post Office property and all, at its estimated value, the whole precisely paid the liabilities of B. W. Raymond & Co., with 7 per cent. interest, together with all the private debts of Mr. Raymond; and left him with about \$2000 for a fresh start. Mr. Dexter rather objected to receiving all the real estate in their hands, as it had begun again to advance, and he was anxious that Mr. Raymond should share in the profit, as well as to have borne the labor. But Mr. R. preferred to have his affairs in a shape to leave his family with some resources in case of his death; and, besides, he wished to have one more clear start in the world. Mr. Dexter would, however, only receive the property on condition that Mr. Raymond should manage it as he had done, and gave him full power of attorney to that effect. After all transfers were made, Mr. D. so arranged matters as that an exact account should be kept of all real estate to him, with 7 per cent. added each year, and then that all profits over the cost and interest should be equally divided between Mr. R. and himself; as his intention, he declared to be, that Mr. R. should not spend seven of the best years of his life exclusively for his benefit; but that if anything was to be made from real estate, he should share it.

Previous to the year 1843, Mr. R. purchased, on account of Mr. D. and himself, of the late Jas. T. Gifford, one-half of his interest in the village of Elgin, and in that year commenced the erection of a woolen factory for Mr. Dexter, which was completed in 1844. He was also concerned in a store at that place till 1851, and owned considerable real estate in the town.

In the year 1839, he purchased the lot No. 122, on Lake street, Chicago, and in connection with Messrs. Strachan & Scott, erected, not the first brick, but the first *fire-proof* stores in the town. In about three weeks after their completion, the great fire of that year swept the whole block on Lake street, from their stores to Dearborn street, including the original Tremont House, standing diagonally across the street from its present position—and northward to the alley.

In March, 1839, Mr. Raymond was put in nomination for Mayor of the city, without any expectation on his part of an election, since party lines were then drawn in regard to city officers, as well as those in the state or nation; and Mr. R. acted with the whigs, while their opponents were largely in the ascendant. He was, however, elected, together with half the Council on the same side, which put upon him the duty of giving a casting vote, whenever the question of office, or appointment, or of party advantage should divide that body. Mr. Raymond acknowledges that for once he was swayed by his friends, who insisted that he ought to use his power for the party to which he belonged: but that on the next day he formed the resolution to which he has since adhered, of never voting for a man whom he deemed unfit, because he was of a particular party. From that time he has been opposed to bringing party politics into the arena of our municipal elections.

During this year the well-known counterfeiting of the Canal checks of \$100 occurred. Mr. Raymond gave such attention to the case that three fellows engaged in the business were put into the clutches of justice; of whom two went to Alton, and the other,* by changing venue, got off on straw bail, and was seen no more in these parts. He brought up in Sing Sing, however, and may be doing service to the state of New York till this day, for aught known of him.

The Mayor, at this time, was paid a nominal salary of \$1000, which, by depreciation of city orders, in which it was paid, reduced it to about \$750. Mr. R. made no money from his office, however; for that year being one of great suffering on the line of the canal, the occupants of the shanties naturally poured into the city for relief; and the salary, drawing after it more of the same sort, went to the aid of the Emeralds, as much more has gone since; not only from the plethoric pockets of Mayors, but from all other pockets reachable, by lugubrious jeremiads of want.

There came on, also, during the year, a great bridge contest. That over the river at Dearborn street being swept away, a strong party arose opposing the erection of another, thinking, either that those who wanted to get from that side of the stream to this, might crawl under; or, that people who would leave the "sunny south" side and banish themselves to those hyperborean regions lying to the northward of the current of mud, ought to stay there, and no more trouble those of so much better taste, and of better fortunes. So strong was this utterance of the *vox populi* that the matter was decided in that com-

* The genuine scrip was printed in the *Chicago American* office, and was an exceedingly poor job. Only a poor printer could have executed the counterfeit: the type, vignette—a ship—and the paper could be found in any country printing office. The counterfeiter tried here was the notorious Otis Allen, of Buffalo, N. Y.

mon council by the casting vote of the Mayor, and a bridge obtained on Clark street, on condition that the north-siders should subscribe \$3000 of city bonds to put it over. And so the benighted hyperboreans were admitted once more to sunlight and the society of "the people."

The sale of Fort Dearborn addition to Chicago took place during that year. Mr. R. had the first intimation of it while in New York, in April; and as he knew from the history of like cases, that the people of Chicago expected the lands to be given to the city, as had been customary, he exerted himself for a postponement of the sale, till the matter could be brought before Congress—the sale being advertised by Mr. Van Buren, the President, to take place in June. For this purpose he visited Washington, and saw the President, who put him off with the soft ambiguities which he knew so well how to use; and as soon as he was gone, hurried on the sale, under the avowal that the government was "in pressing need of funds." As the next best thing, Mr. R., with a committee of the council, put in for a public square, consisting of a block, to be reserved from sale.

Their success was better than nothing, inasmuch as they got half what they asked for; and Dearborn Park testifies to-day the result. He also persuaded the Agent of the Government to add 60 feet to the width of State Street, for a market.

As a sample of celerity of travel in those days, Mr. R. started, in the month of March, 1839, for New York. He left on Tuesday morning, by stage; that is, in a lumber wagon with trunks for seats, and after riding day and night, with one night's exception, brought up at Tecumseh, forty miles from Detroit, at three o'clock on the next Sunday morning, the last seven miles being on foot, as the four horses were sufficiently loaded by the aforesaid trunks and wagon. During one week more of travel, beginning on the following Monday, Buffalo was gained; and one week further still brought them to New York, making three weeks in the transit. Eight years after this voyage of three weeks, Mr. Raymond was laughed at for saying, that in ten years more, he expected to make the same journey in three days. Perhaps the laughers are cachinnating yet.

In 1842, Mr. Raymond was once more elected Mayor of Chicago. This was about the time of the expiration of the long depression which commenced in 1837. City orders were still hawking about at 70 to 75 cents on the dollar, for goods or truck of some sort; and the people were as poor as the city. Real estate had but little value, and everybody would have been rid of it but that nobody else would take it; and so being obliged to keep what they had, an abundance of people were made rich in time in spite of themselves.

The city government entered upon a rigid course of economy; their whole expenditures for the year municipal, 1842, were

about \$9800, and the receipts \$13,800, about \$4000 more than the expenditures, and before the end of the year, city orders loomed up to par.

During the year, the late cemetery grounds were selected; the old burying grounds being among the sand hills near Lill's brewery. Some forty acres of those grounds were bought, surveyed, and a public sale had. To get means of paying for the forty acres, some \$1200 of city script was pledged in a loan of \$600 for sixty days! The sale furnished the means to redeem the script. This will, perhaps, seem small business at this day, but a great many large things begin small.

During the next year, 1843, Mr. R. endeavored to induce some of his creditors to take the lot on Clark street, north of the Sherman House, and including the old Post office, at \$5000 in discharge of liabilities. This idea was scouted, and the property was passed over to his partner as already stated. He kept it till it brought him \$19,500, and it could not be had to-day, probably, for less than \$60,000.

When the Galena Railroad was started, Mr. R. was fully ready to enter into it, with all the means and influence he could command. As one of its first Board of Directors he pledged almost his entire capital, in connection with other Directors, for the purchase of the first iron to build its track, and in connection with John B. Turner, Esq., then acting Director, afterwards President, negotiated the sale of the first issue of bonds of the Road in eastern cities, which, at that day (1848), was not an easy matter, while Wall street was well supplied with Illinois State Bonds, interest unpaid. The first sales were only made to confidential friends, who relied upon their representations, as capitalists generally had no confidence in any western enterprise.

In consequence of the success of that enterprise, and its beneficial effects upon the country and city, he entered upon active efforts to build the road known as the Fox River Valley Railroad, now called Elgin and State Line Branch of the North-Western. The construction of this road was somewhat delayed, owing to the great number of such enterprises on foot at once, and the failure of some of the more unimportant ones, but it is now finished, and in operation from Elgin to Geneva Lake.

Mr. Raymond, though in comfortable circumstances, is not one of the wealthy men of the city; for he has never worshipped the "Golden Calf." His aim has never been to make the most money. Hence, he has commonly sold out any considerable tracts of real estate in his hands, and used the money to advance objects of public use and benefit. He also gives largely and freely. Perhaps no man in our midst more fully realizes the pleasure of a deed of benevolence which costs something, than he. No man of his long residence and various experiences with all sorts of men in public and private life, has fewer

enemies, or more fully commands the public confidence. The trust in his entire integrity of character is full and universal. He has only to believe a thing right to be induced to act accordingly, without question or delay. He is a man of about five feet ten inches in height, with light hair and a blonde complexion. His words are few, in low tones, and his demeanor quiet; the aspect is that of amiability and harmony of character.

He was a Director of the old Hydraulic company, (which first supplied water to the city,) from its beginning to its close; is now a Director in the Gas & Coke Co., and was for many years a Director of the pioneer railroad of the west, the Galena & Chicago Union Rail Road.

He, as President, obtained the Charter for the Old Ladies' Home, of Chicago, and has been connected with the Board of Trustees, as President or Treasurer, since its organization; and Treasurer of the Old People's Home.

He was one of the originators of the City of Lake Forest; obtained the Charter for the Lake Forest University, and was President of the Board of Trustees, for the first twelve years; and still a member of the Board of Trustees; also, a member of the Board of Trustees of Beloit College; and Rockford Female Seminary. In 1864, he, as President, with the aid of a few friends, organized and obtained the Charter for the Elgin National Watch Company, and procured subscriptions to the Stock; he is still connected with the Company as a Director: having resigned the Presidency in favor of a younger and more active man—T. M. Avery, Esq.

Elgin is most indebted to Mr. Raymond for its early and later prominence. He made large investments there; and furnished the material for many of the most important enterprises. His contributions for the establishment of their Academy were liberal; he was one of the first, and for many years, their leading merchant, having placed there, in 1838, the largest stock of goods west of Chicago. He was a partner in the foundry of Adams & Co., the first manufacturers of corn-shellers in the West; he was chiefly instrumental in the establishment of the woolen factory built by S. N. Dexter, Esq., in 1842—the first woolen factory in the State of Illinois; he assisted in the erection of a large tannery; and, lastly, and of greater importance than all the rest, as President of the National Watch Company.

Mr. R.'s political views are Republican; but he regards strict moral character, integrity, and capability above party consideration.

Mr. R. is a consistent member of the second Presbyterian Church, and has held the office of Ruling Elder in it since its organization in 1842.

His health is pretty uniformly good, and the hope of his friends is to see him useful a long while yet.

HON. J. YOUNG SCAMMON.

[From the Chicago Magazine, March, 1857.]

The subject of this sketch was born in Whitfield, Lincoln Co., Maine, in the year 1812. His father was the Hon. Eliakim Scammon, of East Pittston, Kennebec Co., Maine, a man widely known and universally esteemed, and who, for many successive years, represented his town and county in both branches of the Legislature of that State.

Mr. Scammon's mother was the daughter of David Young, one of the first settlers, and most wealthy men in East Pittston. Mr. Young was a prominent man in the community in which he lived. As a Jeffersonian Republican, he often represented his town in the General Court of Massachusetts, Maine having formed a part of Massachusetts until the year 1820, when it was admitted into the Union as a separate State.

Mr. Scammon, from childhood, has had a fondness for agricultural and horticultural pursuits. He would have been a farmer, were it not that an accident deprived him, at the age of 10 years, of the full use of his left hand. Though this probably changed his occupation in life, it did not diminish his natural love for the cultivation of the soil, or destroy his taste for the beautiful and perfect, in all that relates to this truly noble occupation. When he resided at the corner of Michigan Ave. and Randolph Street, he had the finest garden to be seen in the city, at that time; and he now preserves his beautiful garden.

Mr. Scammon received his literary education at the Maine Wesleyan Seminary, Lincoln Academy, and Waterville College. He read law in Hallowell, in his native State; he was admitted to the bar in Kennebec Co., and immediately after started upon a tour of the States. He arrived at Chicago, in September, 1835, upon a cold and stormy day. He made the then somewhat more than unpleasant and hazardous passage of the lakes, in the old steamboat, Pennsylvania, which at that early period made a trip from Buffalo, by the way of Green Bay, to Chicago. On the passage of the steamboat from Green Bay to this city, a furious storm arose, compelling her to put into Washington Harbor, near Death's Door, at the north end of Lake Michigan. Here she lay until the storm abated; provisions running out, and the passengers being put on a short allowance, in the meantime. Taking a fresh start from Washington Harbor, the storm again

raged fearfully, and there was great apprehension of shipwreck among the passengers and crew.

Arrived at Chicago, the steamer was compelled to anchor outside the bar, there being no entrance to the harbor, except for vessels of a very small size. The passengers were landed in a boat, and made their way from the beach up to the old Sauganash Hotel, in a driving rain, through the tall prairie grass and deep mud. They found the hotel crowded, and a very large number of the inmates sick with the bilious fever. In fact, altogether, a more dismal and dreary aspect the town could not have presented. Coming from the beautiful hills of New England, and their bracing and healthy air, the town appeared to the new comer to be almost a dismal swamp; and his first impression was anything but favorable to a location in it.

Mr. Scammon had letters to Mr. Henry Moore, who was then an attorney in the town, and deputy of Col. Richard J. Hamilton, Clerk of the Courts of the County of Cook. In a few days, the weather cleared off, and almost as soon the mud disappeared and there succeeded one of those beautiful Indian summers with which the West is so highly favored. Just as Mr. S. was about to leave town, to continue his journey southward, Mr. Moore called upon him, and stated that the Circuit Court had just commenced its session; that his own business prevented his giving further assistance to Col. Hamilton, and that the gentleman that Col. Hamilton had employed in his place had been attacked with fever. He asked Mr. S. if he would not assist Col. H. during the term of Court. This was regarded by Mr. S. as a fine opportunity to become acquainted with the mode of practice and the forms of legal proceedings in Illinois, and was at once accepted. He accordingly assisted Col. H. through the term; who finding that he was ready and at home in the performance of the duties of Clerk, proposed to make him his deputy, and, at the same time, allow him to "hang out his shine" in the Clerk's office.

In those days, rooms for offices were not plenty in Chicago, and the lawyers, being mostly bachelors, lodged in their offices. Mr. S. had endeavored in vain to find an eligible office, so he accepted Col. H.'s proposal, and established his office in the "North-east Corner" of the Clerk's office, from which it was separated, not as often in early times in the West, were the places of the Bar, the Court, and Jury, by chalk or coal lines, but by an imaginary one.

Col. H. then held about every office in Cook County which he could legally hold. He was Judge of Probate, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Clerk of the County Commissioners' Court, School Commissioner, Recorder of Deeds, Notary Public, and Bank Commissioner. All these were held in a small Grecian building, erected on the north-east corner of the Court House Square,

which was subsequently lengthened, and transformed into a Court House.

Mr. S.'s days were spent in this room, in the study of his profession and attending to the duties of clerk for Col. H. At night, he lodged like other young men, in the same office. As he made acquaintances his business increased, and in 1836, he entered into a copartnership with Buckner S. Morris. They continued together for eighteen months, and did a large and successful business. They then dissolved, and Mr. Scammon practiced alone for a year or more, when he formed a connection with Norman B. Judd, the partnership lasting until 1847, when Mr. Scammon becoming greatly interested in the building of the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad, and wishing to give much of his time to railroad matters, he and Mr. Judd dissolved their connection, though they continued to occupy the same office.

When Mr. Scammon came to Chicago, it was a time of almost universal speculation. Nearly every one was rich; at least in prospect. He was solicited to speculate, but declined, on the ground that he liked his profession, and should be happier in practicing it than in attempting to make a fortune by speculating. He thus was enabled to devote his time faithfully and unremittingly to the practice of his profession. His industry and promptness in paying over to his clients all monies collected—somewhat of a virtue in the early days of Western life—won him the favor of the community, both at home and abroad, and his practice soon became large and commanding. This favor, obtained by faithfulness and probity in the discharge of his business transactions, in the outset of his professional career, has been of great benefit to him in after life, and, no doubt, to it, to a very great extent, he owes the credit which he now enjoys in Chicago, as well as the Eastern cities.

Indeed, Mr. Scammon has made it a leading principle, in all his business transactions, to promise nothing that he could not perform, and to work with the greatest possible zeal and ardor to secure the completion of that which he promised. His credit as a banker he regards as above every other consideration, both of profit and present standing; and he would sacrifice all he possesses to preserve that untarnished. The business public are aware of this, and hence put great confidence in any monied institution with which he is connected.

Mr. Scammon has made great efforts to obtain a safe and reliable banking law in this State, which would be the means of preventing a recourse to the system of what is called "Wild Cat Banking," by which a number of irresponsible institutions are got up in neighboring States and Territories, for the purpose of circulating their irresponsible and irredeemable paper here. The law, as it heretofore stood, restrained and restricted the home banker, while it gave free license to the foreign institu-

tions, which are responsible to no one, and which, at best, depend wholly upon the ability, or rather inclination, of the owners to redeem their promises. Mr. S. has endeavored to make our banking system of that character which would invite the capital of the best business men of this and other States for investment, at the same time that it would possess such guards and restrictions as would secure the public in the most perfect manner. Mr. S. has worked long and faithfully to this end, and hopes finally to be able to accomplish an object which has been one of the leading purposes of his life. The feeling against banking of all kinds which exists in some portions of the State, and which has been taken advantage of by the advocates of irresponsible banking in the northern part, has hitherto been the great obstacle with which Mr. S. has had to contend; but he hopes, in time, and by the aid of the growing intelligence and good sense of the people, to succeed in perfecting such a system of banking as will be a credit to the State, and of the utmost advantage to its inhabitants.

In 1837, without solicitation on his part, Mr. Scammon was selected as the Attorney of the State Bank of Illinois; and in 1839, he was appointed Reporter of the Supreme Court of the State, which office he continued to hold till 1845, when he resigned, on account of the press of his business at home. He was the first Reporter in this State that ever published a volume, and his books introduced an entirely new era in Western Reports. They were brought out in a style inferior to none, and superior to most of the reports in the Eastern States.

The writer might here probably state, that Mr. Scammon has ever taken a lively interest in public affairs. While being indefatigably occupied with the management of his private business, he has not allowed himself to be wholly engrossed in the labors necessarily incident to men of large and accumulative means, but has been, in one way or another, connected with most of the great leading undertakings associated with the progress of our state and city. He has, in fact, been among the foremost in contributing to the development of the resources of Illinois, and the advancement of the interests of Chicago and the surrounding country. A New Churchman or Swedenborgian in religion, which includes all great measures of useful and beneficent progress he is himself progressive in sentiment, and conservative in practice. His motto is, and always has been, at least as long as the writer of this has known him, "Conservative Progress." Still into whatever undertaking he enters, he throws himself with his whole soul, and with all his might; and whenever he undertakes a project, he is indefatigable and preserving, until it is accomplished.

To the Hon. William B. Ogden and Mr. Scammon are the public specially indebted for the commencement of the Galena & Chicago Railroad. After the railroad enterprises which had

their inception in 1837, had failed, and were abandoned, and all confidence in Illinois was lost by capitalists, when hope was nearly dead in the minds of our people; Messrs. Ogden and Scammon counselled together upon the subject of railroads, and the Galena Railroad in particular. To induce the Michigan Central Railroad, which then hardly reached New Buffalo, to come to Chicago, and thus aid in extending railroad lines farther West, Messrs. O. and S. went to Indiana, and spent much time in getting hold of and reviving the charter of the Buffalo and Mississippi Railroad, which possessed the sole power of building a road from Michigan City to Illinois State Line, in the direction of Chicago. They had previously, on the opening of books for the road, traveled over the entire distance between Chicago and Galena, holding meetings, making speeches, and procuring subscriptions to the stock of the Galena Road. They were themselves among the largest stockholders in the Company, and by their exertions and personal pledges of fidelity to the interests of the stockholders, they obtained stock enough to commence operations in the road; and it is not claiming too much to say, that but for them this great pioneer road in the West would not have been commenced till many years later.

In the commencement of the building of this road, Mr. Scammon devoted a large portion of his time, gratuitously, to the project. He familiarized himself with the details of the transactions of the Company, and kept a strict watch upon its operations. Besides, to sustain the credit of the Company, he borrowed money more than once upon his individual name, and loaned it to the Treasurer, when the road had not sufficient credit to obtain an additional accommodation from its banker; nor even the confidence of a majority of its Directors, in their ability to go on with their enterprise. But the faith of the subject of our sketch was full and unwavering. Indeed, so great were the difficulties, and so numerous the disappointments in the outset of the operations of this Company, to which Chicago is indebted for so much of its material prosperity, that at one time, during the absence of Mr. Ogden, all the Directors, with the exception of Mr. Scammon, the late James H. Collins, Esq., and Charles Walker, Esq., appeared discouraged at the prospect of affairs.

The labors and difficulties attending the early days of the history of this enterprise can hardly be realized at the present time. The country was poor; there was no surplus money in it; subscriptions to the stock of the Company could only be obtained in very small quantities; of eighteen hundred shareholders, the larger number held single, or not more than two or three shares each; while all the shares which were taken were subscribed for, not with a view to profit on the stock, but solely to aid in the enterprise. Mr. S. was one of the largest stock-

holders from the commencement of the undertaking, and when great efforts were requisite to keep up the credit of the Company, and to prevent its stock from greatly depreciating, he purchased freely of it, and was, by this means, at one time its largest stockholder. With a view, also, of procuring Eastern aid, he proceeded in company with Mr. Ogden, to Boston, and had an interview with Eastern capitalists. There was at that period so little confidence in the West or Western enterprises, that they were very coolly told by one of the largest railroad proprietors in New England, that "Statistics amount to very little in influencing us. You must go home, raise what money you can, and when you can get no farther, come to us, and give us what you have done, and we will take hold of your road and complete it. You can afford to do this, the road will be of such immense advantage to your country." Mr. S. determined, upon the instant, that these prophetic wishes should not be fulfilled. He returned home, and by his exertions and caution contributed not a little to that careful management of the road, which ultimately in the success of the enterprise, and in establishing, in the minds of capitalist everywhere, the ability of Illinois men to build and manage railroads.

The success of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad is the parent of all subsequent railroad movements in this State. Had that enterprise failed, Chicago would not now count half its present population.

In the very momentous matter, to the present and succeeding generations, of establishing the free school system of Illinois, Mr. Scammon bore a very prominent and important part. There was no provision for absolutely free schools in Illinois when Mr. Scammon removed to the State, and for years thereafter. It required a great struggle to get through the Legislature a special law for Chicago, authorizing the establishment of schools by the Town; and the law was only passed on condition that it would be submitted to a vote of the people, before it became operative. When the vote was taken in 1836, the law was voted down. Its defeat at that time was probably caused by the large number of unmarried men, the greater part of whom were speculators in real estate, who were unwilling to have their property taxed for, as they alleged, the benefit of other people's children.

Mr. Scammon took an active part in getting up the first charter of the City of Chicago. It was partly through his efforts that provision for our present free school system was made in it. The schools first established under it were not, however, sustained by public opinion. There were few children in the town, most of its population being young people, and little interest was felt in the subject. The schools had thus but a sickly existence, and were of very little value.

Mr. Scammon was appointed one of the Board of School

Inspectors in 1839. The free schools were then so nearly extinct, that it was determined to suspend them, until they could be re-commenced under more favorable auspices, and upon a more stable foundation. Mr. S. took hold of the subject in earnest. He drafted new Ordinances and Laws for the regulation and government of the school system, which were passed; and through him and his co-laborers in the Board of School Inspectors, the system of Common Schools, which has been so successful, and of such incalculable benefit to our City, was established on a broad and permanent basis. He remained in the Board of School Inspectors till 1845, when he was elected an Alderman for the First Ward. His election to this office was opposed by some citizens, who feared he was in favor of too extensive a system in public schools. The first school-house—the brick edifice Nos. 81—7 Madison street, east of Dearborn street—had been built under the direction of the Board of School Inspectors, in 1844. Much complaint had been made by residents of the North and West Divisions of the City, at the large expenditure; very many persons residing in the South Division, also denounced the cost of the construction of such a building as extravagant. Mr. S. determined to secure as large a vote as possible, in order to satisfy the public that “big school-houses” were not unpopular. The consequence was, he received more votes, and was elected by a larger majority, than any Alderman, up to that time, had ever received in the City.

When the new Council was inaugurated, the Mayor recommended that the “big school-house” should be sold, or converted into an “Insane Asylum,” and one more suitable to the size and wants of the City be built. It was supposed by the Mayor, that so large a school-house would not be required by the City for a dozen years. Mr. S. was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Schools, in the new Council, and immediately brought forward an ordinance for building a large brick school-house on the North side of the river, stating, at the same time, that it was the policy of the Board of School Inspectors to build another, on the West Side, the next year, and to build a new school-house at least every year. The order was adopted by the Council, and the school-house was built. The construction of this house was followed by that of the fine school building on Madison street, on the West Side. Thus a policy was adopted, which has since been continued and improved upon by the successive Boards of School Inspectors, until our Common Schools have reached their present proud position and high state of usefulness.

In any mention of the Common Schools, however, the name of William Jones, Esq., should not be omitted. For years, in their days of trial, he was one of their most devoted and efficient friends. He seconded Mr. Scammon's efforts and labors with great energy and zeal.

Mr. Scammon has always taken a warm and decided interest in politics. He was a Whig during the existence of that party, and for many years chairman of its Congressional, County, and City Committees; and though often solicited, and more than once nominated for office, he was never a candidate before the people, except on two occasions—once when elected Alderman, and in 1848, when he was the Whig candidate for Congress in this District, which at that time was composed of seventeen counties, and overwhelmingly Democratic. Mr. S. received a very flattering vote, carrying the City of Chicago by a considerable majority, although his party in the city must have been in a minority of more than a thousand votes.

In politics Mr. Scammon also exhibited his progressive proclivities, having been always on the side of freedom and progress in his party. At the same time he was conservative in his action, preferring present good, when he could obtain it, to sacrificing everything to the abstract principles of right. For this reason, though his freesoil sentiments dated back before the great contest between Clay and Polk in 1844, he preferred voting for Mr. Clay, to throwing away his vote. In 1848, also, he advocated the election of General Taylor, knowing there was no probability of the election of a freesoil candidate, and doubting the sincerity of purpose of Mr. Van Buren, who was supported by that party. In 1852, he voted for General Scott, although he preferred Judge McLean, who was his choice for President. In the late contest, he supported Colonel Fremont with all the ardor he was capable of, sparing neither his time nor money in the canvass. Mr. S. has always been inflexibly opposed to the extension of slavery into the territories, and he endeavored, in every way in his power, to divorce the Whig Party of this State from the Pro-Slavery measures with which a large number of its friends seemed willing to suffer it to be embarrassed. He contended that his policy in this respect was both just and expedient; and it is due to him to say, that if his advice had been carried out, the Whig Party in the Northern portion of the State, at least, and especially in this city, would not have remained so long in the hopeless minority in which he found it when he came to reside here. Many who afterwards claimed to be Seward, or freesoil Whigs, had previously to their sudden conversion—subsequently to the election of Gen. Taylor—opposed, with all their strength, the positions which Mr. S. took, and which had they been accepted and carried out by the leaders of the party generally, would have placed the Whig Party in a far better position before the people than it had ever attained.

Mr. Scammon was also among the first to perceive the tendency to the breaking up of old party lines in the country generally, and particularly in this City and State, preparatory to the present fusion of all persons and parties opposed to the spread

of slavery. He suggested and procured the writer, many years ago, to furnish a series of articles on the subject, to a neutral paper then published in this city. These articles, and also other measures taken by him, had no small influence in breaking up party lines in the Chicago City Elections, and in the Northern counties of the State. Although a strict party man himself, as long as he could see any great good which the old Whig Party was capable of performing; still he believed in voting for the best men, and in many instances refused to vote for unworthy or incapable nominees of his own party. It may be proper to state in this connection, that Mr. S. from first to last, has always opposed Native Americanism or Know Nothingism, in all its forms and principles. The writer well remembers the indignation of Mr. S. at an article which appeared in a paper in 1844, of which he was one of the editors. He had a portion of the edition of the paper which contained it suppressed immediately; the article gave great offense, however, as it appeared in part of the edition, and was made a great handle of by the Democrats at that time to the injury of the Whigs. Mr. S.'s principles of civil and religious polity are of too broad and comprehensive a character to accept for a moment the narrow and bigoted platform of that party, which of late has had, for a short time, such a prominent position in our National and State politics.

Mr. Scammon, in 1849, re-organized the Chicago Marine and Fire Insurance Company, an institution which had been chartered in 1836, as a monied corporation, but which had suspended business, although it never had suspended payment. He was one of the chief stockholders under the new organization, and the President of the Company. It commenced with a nominal capital of about \$35,000, and an actual cash capital of not exceeding \$25,000. Under his auspices, as President, the institution has gradually increased its capital, and extended its business, until it has now an actual cash capital of half a million of dollars, and is the largest monied institution in the State.

Mr. Scammon likes to be a pioneer, judging from his past life. He was the first Swedenborgian in Northern Illinois; the first homœopath; and was among the first and most efficient organizers and supporters of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad. He also established the first bank under the General Banking Law of this State—the Marine Bank of Chicago. He organized the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, when it had only three members, one other beside himself and wife. He also organized, in connection with three other gentlemen, the Illinois Association of the same Church, when there were probably not over a dozen Swedenborgians in the whole State.

Mr. Scammon possesses excellent business tact and management, which is evinced not only in his own prosperity, in the

accumulation and investment of a large private fortune, but in the success of the many enterprises in which he was one of the pioneers. He was one of the original stockholders of the Galena; Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy, and several other railroads. Though never a speculator, Mr. S. has become wealthy by judicious and prudent business habits. He is at the present time owner of large and productive real estate in the very centre of the business part of our city. His policy has been not to speculate, by running in debt, but to invest his surplus earnings, and thus reap the advantage of the steady rise of property by the growth of the city. To this policy, together with his industry and economy, he owes his present prosperous position, financially speaking. Mr. S. is a great advocate for the singleness of employments, nevertheless, his practice does not conform to his theory in this respect, as he is banker, lawyer, real estate owner, and has a large interest in railroads himself. It has been asserted by some—perhaps those too envious of another's prosperity—that accommodations from the old Illinois State Bank contributed to Mr. S.'s wealth. This is a mistake; he never borrowed a dollar from the bank, or had any accommodations from it, or purchased a foot of land, or other property belonging to it, except at public sale, in competition with others. The only favor the bank ever did him was to select him as its attorney. He had no other connection with it.

In his profession Mr. Scammon has stood deservedly high, and at one time had the most lucrative practice of any lawyer in the city. In fact, he has generally had more business than he could attend to, and of late years, his banking and other matters have demanded so much of his attention, that he has for the last two or three years given little time to his profession. In 1849, he took Mr. Ezra B. McCagg, who had been his confidential law clerk, for two years previously, into partnership, and they have since practiced together. He has always been a friend to young men, and has had a very large number of students in his office. These it has ever been his habit to accustom to the details of practice, thus grounding them well in the most important particulars in the profession. Thus he has been successful, in almost every instance, in making good, practical lawyers of his students. The advantages of the thorough training received by students in the office of Mr. S., is fully indicated by the fact, that of all the young men who have been under his supervision, not more than two have failed to turn out well.

Mr. Scammon, like all men of positive principles, is decided in his opinions, still he is liberal and kind to those who disagree with him. Indeed, a majority of the young men in his office, who have received his assistance, countenance, and support, have been, in political opinions, opposite to himself.

Though Mr. S. has devoted himself for many years so ardu-

ously to the law, and also been deeply immersed in business, he has not forgotten his early love for literature and fine arts. He continues still to cultivate it. He writes on political and religious subjects, gives public lectures, etc. In conversation he is entertaining, his information being general and varied, and his desire to impart it, a natural attribute of the man. He reads and speaks several modern languages with fluency, and continues his early study of the classics, to which he has always been drawn by his taste for ancient literature.

Mr. S. is blessed with the companionship of a congenial partner, a lady every way qualified to contribute to his happiness, and an interesting family of children, the oldest grown to a fine-looking young man, who is receiving the benefit of as good an education as his father's means and position can afford.

Mr. S. still continues to work as heretofore, though less in his profession. To the question "Why do you not give up business?" he replied, "I have no right to do so. Use is the central principle of Heaven, and no one can be happy, except in the degree in which he is occupied in some useful employment."

The foregoing sketch of Mr. Scammon's life was printed in 1857, in which year he went to Europe with his family, where his wife died, and her remains were interred at Soden, in Nassau, about ten miles from Frankfort on the Main.

When he returned in 1860, the first intelligence that reached him after his arrival at his home, was that the entire capital of the Chicago Marine and Fire Insurance Company had been squandered by its responsible officers, during his absence.

He at once resumed its management, and endeavored to arrest still further disasters; but just then the Rebellion broke out, and the Southern Stocks, upon which the circulation of the Illinois banks was based, becoming nearly worthless, the whole banking system of the State went down. Mr. Scammon worked away resolutely, dealing equally and fairly by all his customers, and in a short time had paid off the indebtedness of the institution, which had been thus robbed and ruined. He restored capital and credit to the company, and under his management his institution continued to enjoy the public confidence, and to transact a large business, until the losses of the great fire and the panic of 1873 rendered it expedient to wind them up. He was always opposed to illegal and depreciated currency of the "wild-cat" order. The acts of the Legislature, which drove illegal currency from the State were written by him, and passed

through his exertions. As a member of the Legislature of 1861, he obtained further stringent legislation on the subject of banking. At the time of the great fire he occupied an enviable position. He had won celebrity as a lawyer, and unlimited credit in business as a banker, and had become possessed of a vast fortune. But the terrible fire swept away his banks, warehouses, stores, and residence; fully half a million dollar's worth of property. In less than a week he had improvised a building on the site of his late residence and resumed his banking business. He was confident the city would be rebuilt, and the old landmarks restored. In fifteen months from the time of the fire, he had expended over a million dollars in rebuilding stores, warehouses, etc. He not only shouldered this enormous work, but he also assisted others to a large extent in their efforts to rebuild. Just in the midst of these gigantic undertakings occurred the defection of the *Chicago Tribune* from the cause of the Republican party, leaving that party without a representative morning paper in the city. Through all his eventful professional and business career he had never failed to take a deep and active interest in national politics, and had aided materially in establishing both of the Republican newspapers in Chicago. In view of this defection, and the approaching Presidential campaign, he decided to found a first-class metropolitan newspaper, that should be a powerful representative and advocate of the principles of the Republican party. He accordingly constructed a building in the rear of his residence, put in the necessary fixtures, engaged his editorial corps, and on March 25th, 1872, issued the first number of the *Inter Ocean*. This paper proved a success, and now has a larger weekly circulation than any other political paper west of the Alleghanies. The paper, outgrowing its limited accommodations, was removed to its present commodious quarters, 117 Lake St. But this enterprise brought upon him the most malignant and slanderous attacks from a rival press, which were followed up with such persistence and ferocity, as to injure both his individual credit, and that of the moneyed institutions with which he was connected. It remains to be said that, after the splendid success of a lifetime, Mr. Scammon has become seriously involved, in consequence of his great losses by fires, his immense expendi-

ture in rebuilding, and the loans and assistance he rendered others who were rebuilding. He has suffered from four considerable conflagrations within the last four years; and, what is remarkable, his fine residence and surrounding buildings have been twice swept away; first in the great fire of 1871, and again in the great fire of July, 1874, and in both instances his premises were the last ones burned, while adjoining buildings, that were not so well protected, escaped unharmed.

He is now quietly engaged in the settlement of his affairs, and in the practice of his profession as a lawyer in Chicago. Many of the public institutions of the city owe their origin to him. He was one of the founders of the Chicago Academy of Sciences, and of the Chicago Astronomical Society. He was the first of the Swedenborgian or New Churchman in Chicago, and one of the original founders of the Illinois Association of that Church. He organized the Church of the New Jerusalem in Chicago. He was the first layman of prominence to favor the practice of homœopathy in Chicago, and built and conveyed free to the Hahnemann Homœopathic Society a commodious hospital. The Dearborn Tower of the edifice of the Chicago University, in which is placed one of the largest refracting telescopes in the world, was built at his expense, and the salary of its director paid by him till the great fire of 1871. On his return from Europe in 1860, he was elected one of the trustees of the University, and has been for many years Vice-President of its Board of Trustees, and the acting President of the same.

As a lawyer, banker, and editor, he has achieved distinguished success, and is a man of large literary and general culture. His private character has been one of moral and religious worth. Mr. Scammon is an industrious, energetic man, of robust constitution, and vigorously employing the powers which have in times past reaped wealth for him; and there is still prospect before him of years of honor, usefulness, and fortune. He bears on his shield the words *Confide in Domino*.

CHARLES WALKER, ESQ.

[From the Chicago Magazine, March, 1857.]

The subject of this sketch is a descendent of an old and wealthy English family of some note, who, in Cromwell's time, were portioned upon the Tweeds and called by the significant name of *Borderers*; members of which were among the earliest adventurers to this country, for we find mention made of his more immediate ancestors, as settlers in the Eastern part of New England, as early as 1640.

Col. William W. Walker, the father of Charles, was a native of Massachusetts. His father, who was a noted cattle dealer, at an early day moved his family to Ringe, New Hampshire, from which place Col. Walker emigrated at the age of 21, having little or no capital, save his trusty axe and that hardy education, which ever characterized the early sons of New England. Admiring the country of Central New York, he located in Plainfield, Otsego County, then but a wilderness. Here he became acquainted with a Miss Lucretia Ferrell, also a native of Massachusetts, whom he subsequently married, and with whom he lived upwards of fifty-five years. Though an Octogenarian, Col. Walker is still in the full enjoyment of all his faculties, having in his life-time filled many important political stations, been prominent and active in the church, ready to lend a help-hand to all worthy benevolent objects, and at the same time secured to himself a competence and the universal respect and esteem of his fellow citizens.

Charles is the oldest son of William W. and Lucretia Walker, and was born February 2, 1802. The country being new, as we have before stated, his educational advantages were necessarily very limited. To a new log school-house, which a few enterprising farmers had built, the young lad was sent, at the early age of six years, to gain those elementary lessons, which have been turned to such practical account through a long life of usefulness. Inheriting a vigorous constitution, and withal an active and inquiring mind, together with uncommon diligence, he not only performed an unusual amount of manual labor upon his father's farm, but made most rapid progress in his studies. Improving his advantages to the utmost during three months in the year, he studied with his teacher during the day, and with his parents during the long winter evenings. Though as a boy

among boys in these juvenile days, his vigor of mind and decision of purpose was such, that notwithstanding his limited advantages, we find he was qualified for, and entered upon, the duties of teacher at the early age of 15; and from that time forward continued in the same vocation during the winter months until he attained his majority, with uncommon success. He may well, we think, look back upon that era of his life, with peculiar pride and pleasure, as he now recognizes the names of many of his old pupils among the distinguished men, of the East and West. While thus engaged, then 18 years of age, he commenced the study of law, but soon found the sedentary habits of that profession not suited to his temperament, with the advice of his physicians he relinquished that idea and turned his attention to more active pursuits; we next hear of him riding through the country, during the summer months, making purchases of sheep and cattle for his father.

At twenty-one, his health being then much impaired, he resolved to enter the mercantile business, and to that end hired himself out to a friend as clerk for a short time, at the very moderate salary of eight dollars per month. It did not, however, require a long clerkship for him to become a complete master of that merchant's method of doing business, and in two months he had fully determined to start in business for himself the following spring.

In the spring of 1824, with \$1350 aggregate capital, compiled of \$350 of his own private funds, \$500 given him by his father, being in fact his own earnings, and \$500 loaned of a neighboring farmer, he started for the city of New York, with no letters of credit, reference, or recommendation; and the following May, opened his store upon the economical plan of doing his own work, and soon after made his first purchase of grain. The next spring, when he went East to make his purchases, he made his first appearance at the Bul's Head Cattle Yard, New York, where the Bowery Theatre now stands, with a fine drove of fat cattle. By close and judicious management business prospered till 1828. But shipping in the fall of that year a large amount of cheese, butter, and pork, to a southern market, the cheese became damaged at sea, and through the mismanagement of agents, and the misapplication of funds, nearly all the accumulated fruits of four years laborious toil were swept away.

But by attending personally to the sales in New York, and the purchases at home, business flourished till '32, when a sudden decline in the price of provisions occasioned another heavy loss. But from 1833 to '34, large operations in all the leading products, attended by a steady and gradual rise, brought to a successful termination all his business operations. In the spring of '33, being in New York, he accidentally became a purchaser from a cargo of raw hides from Buenos Ayres, which he was enabled to obtain upon favorable terms; but upon getting them

home, and finding they were somewhat injured and could not be turned into the New York market without serious loss, he hit upon the expedient of manufacturing them into boots and shoes, and disposing of them at the fall Indian payments at Chicago; in the furtherance of which plan, his brother, Mr. Almond Walker, was in due time sent on, who opened his assorted stock of guns, boots, shoes, and leather, at Fort Dearborn, in the autumn of 1834.

By this adventure his attention was turned toward the West, where he soon saw and appreciated her undeveloped resources; and early the ensuing spring—not twenty-one years ago—he was on his way to this city, with ready means, enlarged and liberal views, an extensive business experience and acquaintance, in the vigor of manhood, with a widespread and favorable reputation at the East, to unite his fortunes with the destinies, and contribute his energies to the development of the unknown resources of this then lake shore village. Among his first operations here was the buying of several lots of real estate, among which was the purchase of John S. Wright, Esq., the corner of Clark and South Water Streets, in connection with Capt. Bigelow, of Boston, and Jones, King & Co., of Chicago, for the sum of \$15,000, *cash*; which was considered by many at that time, a most visionary speculation. Some days subsequent to making this purchase, after reconnoitering in the country, he publicly avowed the then bold opinion that Chicago was destined to be the great city of the inland seas, and in test of his faith in this prediction, immediately set about making this city the principal point for his future operations. In May, '35, while on his way to Chicago, being detained at St. Josephs, there being no regular means of conveyance across the lake at that time, he made several purchases of hides from the flat boats and butchers' stalls for the Eastern market, to which were subsequently added purchases made in and about Chicago; this shipment, it is believed, is the first ever made from the State of Illinois to any point as far east as Utica or Albany.

The next year he established business in Chicago with the late E. B. Hurlburt, Esq., under the firm of "Walker & Co.," upon South Water street, for importing implements of husbandry and household utensils from the East, together with a store of general merchandise, taking in exchange the various products of the West. During this period he was much of the time riding through the country, on horseback, as far north as Green Bay, locating government lands at the Four Lakes (now Madison), Beloit, and other points on the Rock and Milwaukee Rivers.

The next year came the terrible financial revulsions of '37, when ruin and desolation swept the whole country, those who sat in the high places of wealth and affluence were drawn irresistably into the maelstrom of utter insolvency. Banks, like

business men, came down with a crash, and the depreciation of currency produced ruinous confusion in the mediums of exchange. But Mr. Walker was one of the very few men, extensively engaged in business, who stood up against the storm; though he had to bring to bear his best energies and most expert financial skill, for maturing liabilities pressed hard upon him, and his name was largely endorsed upon the paper of other men; had not his reputation in Eastern commercial circles been of the best character, he would certainly have been swamped with thousands of others. But he found, in this emergency, that the relation he thus held as an important commercial medium between the merchant and artisan of the East, and the pioneer husbandman of the West, of immeasurable advantage. The extensive and favorable business reputation he enjoyed among the leading men and Banks of the East, as well as the confidence of the dealers of the West, enabled him to greatly enlarge his operations. To prevent the necessity of purchasing Eastern drafts at ruinous rates, he adopted the plan of purchasing the products of the country with the depreciated currency of the West, and made his extensive shipments of products the medium of exchange through which to meet his Eastern liabilities. Thus he was enabled to prevent the entire stagnation of business at home, preserve his reputation abroad, and in a few years of almost unprecedented vigilance and activity, to entirely overcome all his embarrassments.

The next year his firm purchased a few bags of grain of the surrounding farmers, which were sent to his mills in Otsego County, New York; this shipment of wheat, we believe, was the first ever made from Chicago to so Eastern a market.

During this period, though making Chicago the principal theatre of his labors, he was yet a resident of the State of New York, dividing his time nearly equally between this city, his home in Otsego County; New York City, and traveling on business. In '39, the famous struggle between the old Safety Fund, and the so-called Red Dog, or free banking system, was at its height. As a Representative from his native county he was sent to the Legislature. Carrying with him the same comprehensive and far-seeing views as a legislator, that ever characterized him as a business man, he was instrumental, in no small degree, in carrying through, though opposed by the great preponderance of the money power of the State, that deservedly popular system of redemption and exchange, which has since that time been in effect.

Each succeeding year his business in Chicago continued to increase, so that in 1840, his shipments had so much enlarged, that in the purchase of hides and skins alone, he not only exhausted his supply of merchandise, but was obliged to bring money from the East. In 1842, he established a partnership with Cyrus Clark, Esq., of Utica, under the firm of Walker &

Clark, for receiving Western produce; to bring himself nearer the chief point of business, he resolved to close out his affairs in Otsego County, and in May, 1845, he removed his family to our city.

In 1847, came the great crisis in the grain trade which carried down the oldest and best houses in the Union. Though not escaping without some most terrible losses that would have intimidated ordinary men; with a courage undaunted by reverses—with a nerve and will, equal to the emergency, his craft was guided to a safe anchorage from the fearful breakers that engulfed his less fortunate competitors; and his firm continued to hold its position as the leading grain and produce house in the West.

In 1851, it was found that C. Walker & Son of Chicago, Walker & Kellog of Peoria, and Walker & Clark of Buffalo, were the largest purchasers of grain from the farmers, in the United States. So that the few bags of grain, which in 1839 were sent on their eastern journey and the few bushels of 1840, had, in 1851, grown to 1,500,000 bushels.

At this period a severe attack of that malignant disease, the cholera, destroyed his health and compelled him to leave the financial management of the business to his oldest son, who continued the same under the firm of C. Walker & Son and C. Walker & Sons, till 1855, when he retired from the business altogether, leaving it to his two sons and others, who continue the same under the firm of Walker, Bronson & Co., prosecuting the business with all the vigor of its founder, this firm have during the past year, handled over *five and a quarter millions* of bushels of grain, an amount, we think, which will bear comparison with that of any other establishment in our own country or in Europe. Mr. Walker retires, we understand, the oldest grain merchant in the Union, having steadily remained in one of the most hazardous speculations in the world over thirty-one years. Acting upon the principle that he who can so cheapen and make efficient the avenues of trade, as to bring the productions of the country so much nearer a market, that the farmer can receive but one penny more the bushel for his grain, brings millions to his country, he feels amply repaid for the great risks he has run; and whatever benefit may have accrued to himself, that he has rendered an ample equivalent to those whom he has served.

While thus engaged as a pioneer in his own peculiar business he has been none the less efficient in promoting works of public utility. Prominent in all those great schemes which do so much towards developing the resources of the country, he has ever been one of the foremost in opening up and turning to account those great thoroughfares which vein our broad prairies, and wind their deep channels through our hills and valleys, and which, with every throb of animated industry, quicken into life

new avenues of trade, turning their accumulated wealth to swell the commercial tide that has so strongly set to the heart of our western metropolis.

When the Galena Rail Road was recuscitated, in 1847, Mr. Walker was chosen one of its Directors. He entered into the project with all his heart. In its gloomiest days, his faith never faltered; his confidence in the ability of the country to build the road never failed. When it was found that more subscriptions were necessary, he, as one of a Committee for soliciting additional subscriptions, traversed the country westward, and as far north as Beloit. His courage never wavered. When, in its darkest days, at a meeting of the Board, all confidence seemed to have departed from a majority of the Directors, he, with two or three others, remained firm in his confidence that the work would go through without failure. "A Committee of the Believing" was appointed to take measures to prevent immediate disaster, composed of himself, J. Young Scammon, Esq., and one other. Their measures were successful; and when, on the return of its President, Mr. Ogden, from New York, it became necessary that the Directors should become individually liable for a large sum of money, to secure the iron to lay the first division of the Road; Mr. Walker did not hesitate to be among the first to do so; and to the credit of the Board be it said, that all the Chicago Directors, but one, pledged their individual liability for the progress of the work. Mr. Walker remained in the Directory from the first, and took an active part in the construction and management of the Road.

In Feb., 1856, the enterprise of pushing forward, across Iowa, the counterpart of the Galena Railroad, was projected; and the Chicago, Iowa, and Nebraska Railroad was organized, having its eastern termination at the young and growing town of Clinton, on the western bank of the Mississippi. Of this Company Mr. Walker was one of the main directors and its president.

During the summer of 1856, he, in connection with others, erected and put in operation, at Beloit, Wis., an excellent paper mill, and a large reaper manufactory; and from a very superior quality of clay, upon his farm in Morris, Ill., commenced the manufacture of "Green Mountain Ware," expecting, in time, to supply Chicago and the Northwest with a quality of stoneware equal to any in the United States. He also was largely engaged in farming in the interior.

The conviction, that he who does the most towards opening up the great channels of trade, so that the poor man's labor will gain a level with the rich man's capital, is a practical philanthropist, he was in theory and practice a thorough utilitarian. In private life, a plain man and thoroughly democratic; he recited the incidents of his boyhood and early struggles with a degree of well-earned satisfaction, and none more ready, in every consistent way, with kind words or material countenance

and aid, to cheer onward honest and persevering industry. From the first, a faithful and influential member of the church, and a most exemplary man, we think we do no injustice to any other citizen to say, that while we are frank to concede there are others who have added to themselves greater wealth, to none is Chicago more indebted for her unexampled prosperity than to the late Charles Walker.

In closing this brief notice of one so highly esteemed, we may fitly add the words of another: "In the internal improvements, which have done so much to develop the exhaustless resources of the State, in Railroad enterprises, which have poured a flood-tide of wealth and business into our commercial metropolis of the Northwest, in every public work, whose intention and effect was to build up and promote the healthful growth of the City, he has ever been in the foremost rank of public-spirited men. In short, taking into consideration the varied incidents of his active life, his indomitable perseverance and industry, and the financial ability he has exhibited, Mr. Charles Walker has had few equals and no superiors, as a skilful business man and a good citizen."

THOMAS CHURCH, ESQ.

BY JAMES TAYLOR, PH. D.

Author of "Moral and Social Manners," etc.

INTRODUCTION.

There is a laudable craving in the human heart, to know the history of those who have become distinguished, whether such distinction is the result of personal merit, or of the peculiar circumstances by which they are surrounded. It has been said, that "some are born great, some have greatness thrust upon them;" but certain it is that, however favorable circumstances may be, it requires an inherent power to seize, at the right moment, the advantages which time and circumstances may offer the enterprising and watchful. The life of Thomas Church furnishes interesting material, in connection with the early settlement of Chicago, and is a very prominent example of what may be accomplished by a steady perseverance in an honorable course of industry, integrity, and self-reliance.

The name of Thomas Church will ever be remembered with respect and affection by those who knew him best, and were able to appreciate the many estimable qualities which so well fitted him to take an active part in the early settlement of Chicago, with the interests of which he was identified from the year 1834, to the time of his death, on the 25th day of June, 1871.

The honorable and exemplary life of Thomas Church well deserves a record, which will hand his name to posterity, and keep green the memory of his many virtues, his goodness of heart, and noble aspirations.

On the front page of the "Family Bible," as is customary in rural homes, the record of the Church family was kept, from which it appears, that Thomas Church was born, in the Town and County of Onondago, in the State of New York, on the 8th day of December, A. D. 1800. His father died while Thomas was in his infancy. His mother's maiden name was Olive Rawson, who had been bereft of her husband, and afterwards, by a second marriage, became the wife of Thomas Yates, a man of moderate means, but industrious, enterprising, and honorable. In the household of his step-father, young Church was brought up. Mr. Yates was the owner of a distillery, and the boy, Thomas, was employed in such matters as his strength would permit him

to perform. It was his business to carry, on horseback, the meal from the mill, and to assist in clearing a small farm, where they raised wheat for the family consumption. They had three cows, and a span of horses, with which, when the roads were passable, Mr. Yates used to do teaming, from Albany, for the neighboring merchants. The family were in good circumstances, compared with their neighbors. They were very temperate, for Thomas never new but of one pint of rum being sent for, and that was on account of sickness, except, on another occasion, when two quarts of whisky were purchased, when they had a 'logging bee.'

When Thomas was twelve years old, the father removed to the town of Benton, Ontario County. From this time he used to assist his mother, and, at times, went to school. He occasionally did little chores for the neighbors, for pay, and one day earned six and a-half cents, for gathering stones from a hay meadow. Small as were these earnings, he had a purse of his own, and was anxious to increase his store. When he was fourteen years of age, his parents removed to Bennington, Genesee County, on the border of civilization, and there he practiced a pioneer life, helping to clear, with his two younger brothers and his father, as much land as they were able. Here were spent five years, their home a log house, roofed with split-staves and bark, split and hewed logs for the floor, and stakes set in auger-holes, with a board on them for seats; a broad chimney, funnel-shaped, big end down, plastered within with clay and straw. The manufacture of maple sugar formed a part of their employment, and very much interrupted the attendance at school.

And now occurred one of those events which illustrate on what trifles our destinies depend. A disagreement between Thomas and his step-father took place, as to whether he should have the large or the small knife to cut basket wood. His father told him, that "unless you have everything your own way, you will not do anything." This charge was denied, and he was then told: "If he did not like to remain at home, he could leave." The young man replied: "If I thought you were in earnest, I would jump the bars as quick as you like." And upon this he let fall the axe, "jumped the bars," and left his home. That jump—from home into the world—was ever remembered as a mighty event.

And now, launched upon the world without knowing where to go—without money—without friends—with only the clothes he had on—no friends to aid or advise! His thoughts turned to those who were better off, who had the advantages of education, wealth, parents, kind friends that would help them. He envied those who had learned a profession or trade. He stood alone—without help—almost without hope! But he had health and youth, and as the first sadness wore away, hope revived, he felt stronger, and resolved that, with an honest purpose, and with the help of God, he would on himself rely; that he would take

no step backward, and he hurried on to seek employment. About three miles from his home, he engaged to tend a mason for two weeks, for which he was to receive twelve bushels of wheat and six York shillings in money. The man he had worked for was a miller. There came to the mill a brother of young Church, with a grist. Thomas told him that he had twelve bushels of wheat, for which he could get only thirty-seven and a-half cents a bushel, but he wanted to help pay the clearing, and if his father would send his bags, he could have the wheat.

The boy soon came back with the bags and got the wheat; but young Church was afraid his father might relent; but he did not. The wheat was gone, and he now had a capital of six York shillings. However, he agreed to work for the same man, Mr. Owen Cotton, for one year, at ten dollars a month, the payment to be made as follows: fifteen dollars in cash, fifteen dollars in orders on a dry-goods store; half the balance in horn cattle, and the other half in grain, at barter price, *viz.*, fifty cents a bushel, the market price being thirty-seven and a-half cents. In this situation he learned to run a linseed oil mill, a grist mill, and a saw mill; and, as Mr. Cotton was often from home, young Church acted as clerk, sold lumber, grain, and oil, and often went with produce to the neighboring towns and exchanged it for raw material. Thus he gained some knowledge of trade, improved his education, and saw a little of the world. He had now made the acquaintance of Miss Rachel Warriner, and this inspired his ambition. Times improved, money became more plenty, and he exchanged his cattle and grain with Mr. Cotton for a little farm. He worked another year, during which time he sold the farm for cash, and, at the end of his term, he again agreed to work for six months for the sum of sixty dollars.

At the expiration of the two and a-half years, he had \$227.00 in cash, and a new suit of clothes. Rachel waited, and, in 1823, they were married.

With new responsibilities, new plans were laid, and often thrown aside; but, ultimately, it was concluded to buy a small farm, and establish a home. With this view, Mr. Church went to Chataque county, selected and bought a small piece of land, built a cabin on it, and then returned home on foot, by the way of Buffalo. There he was overtaken by a snow-storm, and detained one whole day. This delay was the cause of a radical change in all his plans.

Buffalo was then a village of 2500 inhabitants, and Mr. Church did not know any one. He had heard, however, of an acquaintance of his cousin, and this man he sought out. He found him keeping a little store, and as busy as a beaver, notwithstanding the bad weather. While sitting in the store, the idea occurred to him, Why cannot I do something of

this kind? And this thought occupied him during the remaining walk home of thirty miles. Of course, his wife was consulted. Her advice was—"Go to Buffalo—if your heart is set upon this enterprise, it will be successful." To Buffalo accordingly they went, in February, 1824, leased a spot of ground, and erected on it a small store and dwelling. When a stock of goods had been laid in, their money was exhausted, and customers were anxiously looked for. The first sale amounted to three cents. A one dollar bill was presented, and taken, and ninety-seven cents in silver given in exchange. Woful to relate—the bill proved to be on a broken bank! This mishap was a source of much self-reproach, that he should have taken a young wife to a strange place, locked up all his means in a business he knew nothing about; and here was a pretty beginning.—He did not tell his wife for some time. A bank note detector was now purchased, and soon matters began to mend. The venture proved successful. Trade increased; and the first year Mr. Church cleared \$200. This was probably one of the pleasantest years of his life. It was his first venture in business, and the first year of his married life. All things prospered with him; and he had good reason to look forward to a successful business career, and a happy domestic life.

They remained ten years, during that time the lot he had occupied had grown in value, from \$150 to \$4000. In fact, Buffalo had become a city, competition came in, and it was this suggested a removal further west.

In the spring of 1834, Mr. Church embarked with his effects on board of a small schooner, bound for Chicago. Ever since 1832, when Gen. Scott's army had returned from the Black Hawk war, reports had been circulating of the great fertility of the soil of Illinois, and of the advantages which Chicago would offer to the adventurous settler. Congress, too, had made an appropriation of land to the State for the purpose of constructing a canal from Chicago to the Illinois river.

Far-seeing men discerned in this great enterprise an unbroken chain of water communication between the Mississippi and the great lakes, a sure prognostic of the future development of Illinois, and a bright harbinger of the brilliant destiny in store for her. Mr. Church himself was not insensible to these great advantages, although he, in common with the early settlers of Chicago, had no idea of the rapidity of the future growth of the city. It was supposed, too, that Congress would soon make an appropriation for the improvement of the harbor at the mouth of the Chicago river.

The schooner on which Mr. Church had embarked, arrived at Chicago on the second day of June, 1834, and anchored about three-quarters of a mile outside of the mouth of the river. No vessel had as yet passed over the bar into the river. The passengers came ashore in boats, and landed their goods in the

same way. We may mention here, that the first vessel that entered the Chicago river was the schooner Illinois, Capt. Pickering. This adventurous officer succeeded in passing the bar in safety in the fall of 1834. It was considered, as indeed it was, quite a feat, and an epoch in the history of the State. That night a jubilee was held in the cabin of the schooner, at which plenty of champagne was drunk, toasts given, and speeches made.

There were about four hundred people in Chicago on Mr. Church's arrival, besides the garrison at Fort Dearborn, which embraced 200 U. S. troops. The business of the place was all done on Water street. Mr. Church endeavored to buy a lot there, but was unsuccessful. The land called canal lands was principally owned by the State. Individuals who owned lots would not sell them. Individuals claiming the canal lands by possession, designated their claim by having a stick of timber or an old stove on it, and asked \$500 or \$600 for their right of possession. But speculation in lands was not what Mr. Church came to Chicago for. He desired to get into business, and wished at least to own the property on which he lived. He succeeded, finally, in purchasing two lots, Nos. 111 and 113 Lake street, for \$250 each, and immediately erected a store and dwelling house on the property, 20 by 40 feet, and two stories high. There were few or no regularly traveled streets in Chicago at that time. The travel from the Fort to the branching of the river was along the river bank and on some ridges that crossed ravines leading to the stream. Mr. Church's store was the first one built in Chicago fronting on Lake street. Mr. J. K. Botsford had built a store on Dearborn street a little while before, the end of which reached to Lake street:—but at that time there were not enough houses built to give direction to Lake street. In building his house, Mr. C.'s greatest difficulty was to get assistance enough. After buying a raft of timber in the river, he had to get it sawed by hand into joists and rafters, in the same manner that ship-timber is sawed. The frame being prepared, a derrick was rigged, and the frame raised to its place by a pair of oxen. His weather boards were brought from the Wabash country, by what were called "prairie schooners;" wagons drawn by five or six yoke of oxen. This *land voyage* occupied several days, the *crew* taking their provisions with them, and camping out at night. After selling out their cargo and part of their oxen at Chicago, they would take on board a return load of salt, groceries, or dry goods, and 'set sail' for home again. A great deal of Mr. Church's early trading was done with the captains of these *prairie schooners*. They continued their trips till the march of civilization rendered them no longer necessary.

In the spring of 1835, Mr. Church went to Buffalo for a stock of goods. It took five days to get to Detroit by stage. Send-

ing his goods by lake, he returned by way of Detroit and Michigan City. There was no regular wagon road, and all vehicles ran along on the beach of the lake. It took two days to come from Michigan City to Chicago. There were fourteen passengers on this trip. A lady and two gentlemen rode on the top of a wagon loaded with baggage. The other eleven passengers walked on before. The lady was Mrs. JOHN S. C. HOGAN, wife of the then postmaster at Chicago. Her husband, and Mr. JOHN L. WILSON, afterwards Sheriff of Cook county, were also in the party.

On arriving home, Mr. Church found that his goods had got there before him. During his absence, James Whitlock, Esq., Register, and Col. E. D. Taylor, Receiver of the General Land Office, had been negotiating with his wife for the preparation of a building for the use of the office, and she had agreed with them that, on his return, Mr. Church would fit up and furnish two rooms, in the upper story of his store, for their purpose. He immediately hired the necessary assistance, and set about the fulfilment of the contract. The rooms were finished by the first day of June, 1835, and the land sales of that year immediately commenced. The attendance of buyers was very large and the bidding quite spirited. The purchasers stood out on Lake street in front of the land-office, and the constant tramping of such a crowd made the place very muddy. To obviate this, and to give the public a dry place to stand, Mr. Church caused a large quantity of gravel to be brought from the lake shore, and spread daily over the street. The receipts from the sales of land in two weeks were over half a million of dollars. Mr. Church's profits on the goods sold at the same time and for three weeks thereafter, five weeks in all, was \$800. The next spring, Mr. Church built an addition to his store, making it one hundred and eighty by twenty feet, and replenished it with a fresh stock of goods. In the year 1838, his retail sales for cash amounted to over \$41,000. That year, and the preceding, was a hard year with merchants generally. The great commercial smash up of 1837 had shaken the country to its remotest extremities, and even Chicago felt its disastrous effects.

There are some very interesting incidents connected with Mr. Church's early experience of merchandising in Chicago. In 1837, he purchased at one time seventy-five tons of goods, the freight on which, from New York to Buffalo alone, was \$1100. Late in the fall of 1837, sugar was very scarce here, and Mr. Church went to St. Louis, bought a large quantity, and had it re packed in barrels. This was necessary, as it had to be transported in wagons from Ottawa here, and the roads being none of the best, there was some danger that the teamsters might get stuck in the sloughs. In case this accident should happen, they could roll the barrels to *terra firma*. This lot of sugar cost eight and three-fourth cents per pound in St. Louis, and it sold

here at the rate of six pounds for a dollar. It was customary to buy everything by the dollar's worth. The smallest change in money was a half dime. Sixteen of these, or eight dimes, passed for a dollar.

It was about this time that a change took place in the business of Chicago. Instead of importing all articles of necessity, Chicago now began to export provisions. Chicago merchants, too, now began to give credit to dealers in the country, to buy their produce, to borrow money on warehouse receipts, and to appoint foreign agents to do their business for them. Mr. Church, however, did not engage in this branch of traffic, but added to his other importations, paints, glass, oils, iron, and domestic dry goods. In 1840, he moved his old store, and built a forty feet front, fire-proof brick building on Lake street, Nos. 111 and 113, and moved his goods into it, taking into partnership his best clerk, Mr. M. L. Satterlee, late of the firm of Satterlee, Cook & Co.

After a successful business of three years, Mr. Church bought out Mr. Satterlee, and this partnership was dissolved in 1843, when Mr. Church disposed of his interest in the store, and invested his means, which were now considerable, in the purchase of real estate. In his transactions in real estate, he was as fortunate as in his mercantile career. One of the predominant traits in his character, though not the ruling one, was caution. He was never disposed to embark in hazardous undertakings; but he has uniformly succeeded in whatever he has undertaken.

An estimate of Mr. Church's property, on retiring from merchandising, showed a clear value of \$37,000, and this was the result of twenty years' prudent enterprise, during which time he never was embarrassed to meet his engagement, and has always paid one hundred cents on the dollar, and never had a law suit which required the argument of an attorney.

Mr. Church now invested his means in real estate, having gained, by experience, a knowledge of the rapid rise in value; and so successful were his investments that, in the year 1856, his interest and rents amounted to \$10,000; and, in 1857, to double that amount. The property was estimated, January, 1857, at \$300,000, and his income \$22,554.50 per annum. The havoc of panics has rendered these estimates subject to great vicissitudes; but, like the receding wave of the flood-tide, the rise of the reflux exceeds the depression, and an advance is maintained.

The rise in the value of land in Chicago, commenced at an early day. In 1830 or 1831, twenty feet of ground on Lake st., west of, and adjoining No. 113, sold for \$7. In 1834, the same ground was sold for \$250. In 1836, it was sold for \$8000, it having then a building on it not worth over \$2000. It is now worth or \$1500 per foot, the snug little sum of \$30,000.

In June, 1836, the great Canal sale commenced, and a large

amount of canal lands were sold. The terms were, a quarter down, and the balance in one, two, and three years, with interest on the deferred payments at six per cent. in advance. That was all, however, that was ever paid, as a few years afterwards the State compromised with the purchasers, giving them one-half of the whole quantity of the land for the one-quarter of the price which they had paid. In 1838, the State offered their lands on twenty years time, ten per cent. of the purchase money down, and six per cent. interest for the balance. They took in payment, too, State Stock, which was then depreciated to such an extent that thirty dollars of it could be bought for ten dollars. Such an opportunity to invest money profitably in lands has never occurred since; but at that time nobody wanted to buy, for there was very little money in circulation. In 1839, at the Fort Dearborn sales, lots on Michigan avenue were purchased at a little over \$1 per front foot, lots of 48 feet front selling at \$51. The same lots are now worth forty thousand dollars. Since that date, land has been steadily increasing in value.

In the summer of 1834, the first Tremont House was built on the north-west corner of Lake and Dearborn streets. It was burned down in 1839, that being the first large fire that had ever happened in Chicago. Mr. Ira Couch immediately built the second Tremont House, on the site of the present edifice, and kept it till it too, was burned down in 1849. In the fall of 1849, Mr. Couch erected another noble structure. It was called by the croakers at first "Couch's folly" in derision, some persons thinking it much too large for a place like Chicago. But immense as it is, it has been thronged with guests, and its popularity is increasing every year. In 1871, the Tremont House was again ravaged by the flames, and is again rebuilt in a style still more magnificent.

Mr. Church, notwithstanding his close attention to business, his active mind and benevolent disposition has always led him to the discharge of his duty as a citizen; active in the promotion of whatever would benefit the interests of Chicago, he felt a pride in its rapid progress. For eight or nine years, Mr. Church was city assessor of the south division, and also Commissioner for the opening of streets and alleys, for the partition of real estate, and in awarding widow's dower; for the planking and paving of streets, and for appraising the damages and benefits arising from the establishment of lines of wharfage and dockage on the river. In the entire course of his official conduct, requiring the making of maps of subdivisions of the city, and placing the abstract titles on record, we have not heard of a single mistake, or a single complaint of unfairness or partiality.

In 1849, Mr. Church was nominated for mayor of the City of Chicago, by the Whig party, but was defeated.

On the organization of the Fireman's Insurance Company, Mr. Church was elected president, and filled the office with great credit, commanding the respect and esteem of his brother directors. As a token of their respect, in 1863, they presented Mr. Church with a handsome gold watch; value, \$250. The character of Mr. Church is too well known to require eulogy, but the object of a biographical sketch is to hand down to posterity the record he has made with his cotemporaries.

In 1854, when the cholera raged in our midst with such alarming fatality—when the angel of death held high revel in our streets—when strong men and little children alike were stricken down on every side—when medical skill and the tenderest care were unavailing to stay the progress of the plague or to snatch its victims from its deadly grasp—when all business was paralyzed and when hundreds were fleeing from the pestilence, Mr. Church remained at home, discharged his usual duties, and ministered to the wants of the sick around him. He was not alone in this. Many others of our citizens, like him, devoted themselves to the noble work of alleviating the sufferings they could not prevent.

Successful in his pecuniary circumstances, Mr. Church was not less prosperous in his domestic relations. He was happy in his first marriage, in the possession of the choice of his heart's first affections; in whom he found a congenial help in his early struggles, and a companion in his early successes. To her was born five children, two of whom survive and are married to very estimable gentlemen now living in Chicago. In April, 1839, Mrs. Church died, which was the cause of great affliction to her husband and family. His two children were deprived of a mother's fostering care, and his happy home had become desolate. Hired help can not supply the place of parental affection, and, for a time, there was sorrow in that dwelling.

In the fall of the same year, at the sick-bed of a neighbor, Mr. Church accidentally met Mrs. Rebecca Pruyne; knowing that she had no other interest than a neighborly sympathy, he thought it a manifestation of a kind heart, and became favorably impressed. She was a lady of comely appearance, respectably connected, was the widow of the late Peter Pruyne. Mr. Pruyne was senator of this State, and Rebecca was daughter of S. W. Sherman, of this city. She had one child. Mr. Church had two children; it was a legal proportion, she was entitled to her thirds. This casual meeting ripened into an acquaintance, and, ultimately, into a mutual sympathy and attachment, and, in November, 1839, they were married. The alliance proved mutually satisfactory, and, as their pecuniary circumstances were ample for their moderate habits, they had only to seek happiness in the rational enjoyments suited to their tastes. Their quiet of home life, they diversified by travel; they visited the homes of their early youth, and gratified themselves in again

viewing the scenes with which their affections and memories were entwined. These travels were extended to many places of interest. Mr. Church was, in the meantime, carrying on his enterprises in real estate, building largely, and watching with great interest the progress of the city, until June, 1871, when, after a short illness, he died, regretted by a large circle of friends. Obituary notices were published in the daily press, and the directors of the Firemen's Insurance Company passed the following resolutions:

Resolved—That the news of the death, on Sunday evening, of our first and only president, Thomas Church, fills our hearts with sorrow, and is an event greatly to be deplored.

Resolved—That his death is not only a loss to this company, but to the community in which he has so long honorably and exemplarily lived.

Resolved—That we will, in a body, attend his funeral, and that we extend to his family our sympathies, and that these resolutions be spread upon the records of the company, of which he has so long been an honored and useful president.

Mr. Church was a large and fine looking man, of plain and unaffected manners, and modest and retiring in his deportment. We are not informed whether or not he was connected with any religious society, but from our personal knowledge of his character, we should pronounce him to be Christian at heart and in practice, whether he was so in name or not. He was one of our wealthiest citizens, but he was esteemed and respected far more for his estimable qualities, for his sound good sense, for his active usefulness, and for his quiet and unostentatious benevolence, than for the adventitious glare of mere wealth.

Although part of the present sketch was in type before it was submitted to the present editor, he has been permitted a sight of an autobiography of the late Thomas Church. It is replete with very interesting matter bearing upon the history of Chicago during nearly forty years of close observation. These observations will form invaluable material in preparing a history of Chicago, but are too lengthy to be even glanced at in this sketch we extract the following: "I feel very grateful and thank a divine Providence for the good and kind husbands that our daughters have. They are thrifty, industrious, and good providers for their families. The eldest, Geo. A. Ingalls, is a lawyer; the second, Ephram Ingals, is a doctor; the youngest, S. D. Kimbark, is an iron merchant. Neither of them use profane language, or tobacco, and are quite temperate. They all came home last Thanksgiving-day, each brought their eldest child, and I believe the arrangement is, that on next Thanksgiving-day, our extension-table is to be spread so as to admit three more little ones. I feel proud of our boys, and have reason to hope that they will continue in well-doing; remain good men, good husbands, and good fathers!"

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